

$\Delta$   
199.4  
D321c  
v. 1  
c. 2

UNIVERSITY  
OF FLORIDA  
LIBRARIES



COLLEGE COLLECTION

CONTEMPORARY  
EAST  
EUROPEAN  
PHILOSOPHY

Edward D'Angelo  
David H. DeGroot  
Dale Riepe  
*Editors*

Vol. 1



A S p a r t a c u s book

S p a r t a c u s

Editorial Board

René Boux

Robert B. Carson

Paul Crosser

Edward D'Angelo

David H. DeGrood (Chief Editor)

Barrows Dunham

K. T. Fann

James E. Hansen

Howard L. Parsons

Dale Riepe

John Somerville

Marx Wartofsky



CONTEMPORARY  
EAST  
EUROPEAN  
PHILOSOPHY

Edited by

Edward D'Angelo

University of Bridgeport

David H. DeGrood

Editor-in-Chief

Dale Riepe

State University of New York at Buffalo

Contributing Editors

John C. Cullen

New Haven College

Southern Connecticut College

Vol. I

S p a r t a c u s Books

115 Balsam Avenue

Bridgeport, Conn.

Robert M. Kunz

D'Youville College

Copr. David H. DeGrood 1970

1970





To

Elaine, Walter, Betty, Tim, & Marie

DeGrood

Howard & Helen Parsons

John Somerville

Barrows & Alice Dunham

Adele Liskov, Richard O'Brien, Joan Brown, Paul Piccone, James E.

Hansen, Stanley Weisberger, René Boux, Robert B. Carson, Marx Wartofsky

and

All of our Philosopher-Colleagues

of

Eastern Europe

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2011 with funding from  
LYRASIS Members and Sloan Foundation

<http://www.archive.org/details/contemporaryeast01dang>

## Preface

In the Fall of 1969 Professor D'Angelo and I conceived the idea of perhaps constructing an anthology of East European Philosophy. The response from philosophers was cordial and cooperative; soon we were flooded by articles in German, French, English, and Russian. Now that our efforts near their completion, I thought that the book might be brought out in its present, mimeographed form, even before one of the usual publishers accepted it, to enable philosophers to assimilate such unfamiliar and provocative ideas early.

An overall evaluation of the efforts within is not attempted here; the editors' philosophic views do not enter directly into the book. Rather, the East European philosophers are allowed to speak for themselves, without implied concurrence or rejection on the part of the editors.\* It is our hope that some of the major philosophic currents of this vital region are exhibited.

Our contributors to this volume are Stéfan Anguélov (born in 1925), Vice-Director of the Institute of Philosophy of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. Anguélov's concentrations are ethics and the philosophy of history. His books include: Socialist Humanism and Its Critics (1963) and Marxian Ethics as a Science (1970). Auguste

\* This is the first volume of from four to six to appear. Other philosophers in the succeeding volumes include: Nikolai Iribadjakov and Dobrin Spassov (Bulgaria); Milan Machovec, Igor Hrušovský, Karel Berka, Miloš Jůzl, Ladislav Tondl, and Karel Kosík (Czechoslovakia); Georg Lukács, Zádor Tordai, and Agnes Heller (Hungary); Bogusław Wolniewicz, Adam Schaff, and Stefan Morawski (Poland); Ion Banu, Henri Wald, and Niculae Bellu (Romania); Robert Steigerwald, Hermann Ley, Franz Loeser (Germany); George Brutian and Dimitri Yermolenko (U.S.S.R.), and Svetozar Stojanović (Yugoslavia).



Cornu (born in 1888), formerly a Professor at the Lycée Buffon (Paris), though a Frenchman, has also been a Professor at Leipzig and Humboldt universities in the German Democratic Republic, and has contributed to the progress of philosophy there as elsewhere. Among his books are: The Origins of Marxian Thought (Charles C. Thomas, 1957) and the magnum opus, Karl Marx et Friedrich Engels: Leur vie et leur oeuvre (Paris, beginning 1955). Mihailo Marković is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade, as well as a member of various Yugoslav research institutes. His writings include: Formalism in Contemporary Logic (1958) and The Dialectical Theory of Meaning (1961). György Márkus of the Institute of Philosophy at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences was born in Budapest in 1934, finishing his education in 1957 at the Philosophical Faculty of Moscow University. Like Professor Marković, Márkus has studied in the United States as well, being a Ford Foundation Fellow in 1965-1966. Márkus' books include: Language, Logic and Reality: Critical Comments on Wittgenstein's Tractatus (1963); Main Currents of Modern Western Philosophy (with Z. Tordai, 1964); Marxism and Anthropology (1966); and Perception and the Mind-Body Problem (1968). His present interests center on the problem of a Marxist philosophy of history. Mihály Vajda (born 1935) is presently Research Fellow of the Institute of Philosophy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Vajda belongs to Lukács' circle, and his writings include: Critique of Husserl's View of the Sciences (1958) and On the Borderline of Myth and Ratio: The Phenomenology of E. Husserl (1959). The contributors' essays comprise the first chapter of the entire set of volumes and the first essay of chapter 2. For technical reasons, the index will begin in volume II.

I express my profound thanks to the cooperative efforts of many scholars: my fellow editors, our esteemed European colleagues, our translators, and our typists and technical assistants (Joan Brown,



Alvin Scott, Claudia Vargas, Elsie Havanich, Elaine DeGrood, and Neil Shaw), to Howard L. Parsons, Paul Piccone, and to President Henry W. Littlefield (President of the Committee on Projects in Research of the University of Bridgeport) and René Boux (Secretary of that Committee) for the subsidy provided this research. The errors of the anthology remain the sole responsibility of the editor-in-chief.

David H. DeGrood

Fall, 1970





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Volume I.

Preface.....	pp. i-iii.
Chapter I. Philosophy and Human Practice.....	pp. 4-60.
György Márkus, Marx's Earliest Epistemology.....	pp. 4-15.
Stéfan Anguélov, Reflection and Practice.....	pp. 16-28.
Mihailo Marković, Human Nature and Social Development.....	pp. 29-44.
Mihály Vajda, Nature, Society, and Praxis. ....	pp. 45-60.
Chapter II. Marxism-Leninism.....	pp. 61-
Auguste Cornu, The Formation of Historical Materialism.....	pp. 61-83.



Gyorgy Markus

"Marx's Earliest Epistemology"\*

In his first work, the doctoral dissertation on the difference between the natural philosophy of Democritus and that of Epicurus, the influence of Hegel on the epistemological viewpoint of Marx is still strongly perceptible. The sole instrument to Marx for the correct cognition of reality is philosophy, which is "genuine knowledge", in contrast not only to sensation and ordinary consciousness but also to the empirical and experimental sciences of nature. These latter presuppose something transcendental to be distinguished from human consciousness, and their purpose is merely to drive the manifold of sensuous truth from simple and general hypotheses. For these reasons, science does not maintain a consistent opposition to religion, which in its most complete form, in Christianity, is nothing else than the "completed philosophy of transcendence."<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the method of natural science, resting upon real possibilities, the method of logical formulation, has a one-sided character shaped by the understanding.<sup>2</sup> While this method establishes for each individual phenomenon the cycle of causes, conditions, etc., which underlie its existence, it mutilates the universal and singular life of nature. In contrast, philosophy is the negation of all transcendence. Its object is Mind, i.e., self-consciousness. For just this reason, philosophy no longer presupposes that the categories are the specifications of some reality, some object outside thought; it considers these categories in their entirety, in their transition and movement, as an independent substance and as its proper object: "Ordinary thinking always has abstract categories ready which

\* Translated by Robert M. Kunz. Article abridged for this volume.



separate it from existence. All philosophers have made the categories themselves into existing things."<sup>3</sup>

Mind (self-consciousness) which reveals itself to be the genuine object of philosophy is not the empirical, individual self-consciousness, which is unable to penetrate nature as a whole, which can only abstract from it, and which denies it any independently existing objective reality.<sup>4</sup> This Mind is the concrete universal, the self-forming and developing historical self-consciousness of mankind, which while disclosing itself in nature does not distort nature, because according to its essence it represents nothing but the final product and emergence into consciousness of the forces that are active in nature; and these forces are of a mental character. Thus philosophical knowledge is at the same time knowledge of nature taken as an object. "When we recognize nature to be rational, its independence ceases. It no longer alarms our consciousness, and indeed Epicurus makes the form of consciousness in its immediacy, in its conscious realization, the for-itself in the form of nature. Only when nature is entirely detached from conscious reason, as reason is observed in nature itself, is nature entirely the possession of reason. Any relation to nature as such is at the same time an alienation of reason."<sup>5</sup>

The role of philosophy, however, is not exhausted in its passive task of bringing things to consciousness. If the object of philosophy is self-consciousness, philosophy can say no more about it than what it is: self-consciousness can in theory (post festum) appear only as it has been realized at a given historical stage in real life, in the morality, customs, law, the state, etc., of the people. The philosophic system's "relation to the world is a relation of reflection."<sup>6</sup> In this manner Marx in his short sketches on the history of Greek philosophy takes pains to reveal the connection between Greek social and political life and philosophy. The development of the philosophy of any era, therefore, means the effort to grasp the Zeitgeist in its totality, with the final purpose of realizing "World-Philosophy", which embraces all problems of



the time and unites "abstract principles into a unified whole." Thus the active, creative role of philosophy can be explained. In "World Philosophy" the Zeitgeist has found itself, its complete and free expression as theoretical reason would then be realized; per se, it stands in contrast to the world itself in which the same self-consciousness is incorporated and transformed into substance. Being cannot realize itself without contradiction, but only in alienated form. The phenomenon, the immediate existence, contradicts the essence, the interior, rational content. For philosophy, therefore, the world appears as false, and thus it becomes itself practical energy which turns itself against this same false world. To the degree, however, to which this practical philosophy, philosophical criticism, realizes itself, the fact must become clear to it that the limits and contradictions which it thinks it finds in opposing reality are the limits and contradictions of its own intellectual content. As it realizes its principles in this fashion, it frees itself as well as the world from these principles, and prepares a new era for the development of self-consciousness.\* Only then is philosophy in general and

\* "It is a psychological law that theoretic Mind, when it becomes free in itself, turns to practical energy; emerging as will from the shadow-realm of Amethes, it turns against the worldly reality which exists outside it. . . . But the activity of philosophy is itself theoretical. It is Critique which measures individual existence against essence, particular reality against the Idea. . . . Inspired by the drive to realize itself it comes into tension with the Other. The inner self-contentment and symmetry is broken. What was inner illumination becomes consuming flame which directs itself outward. Thus it results that the process in which the world becomes philosophy is also the process in which philosophy becomes the world, that its realization is also its loss, that what it gains outwardly becomes its inner loss, that in this struggle it suffers the defects against which it is struggling,





life according to "World Philosophy" possible.

In this interaction and unity of the passively reflecting and the actively forming, of the theoretical and the practical, of the absolute and the historically relative, the theoretical moment is decisive, not only because it appears in every practical activity, but also in consequence of the application of the Hegelian teleology of the concept, which is profoundly radicalized in its social content. The immanent goal of historical development is the complete transformation of substance into the subject, the exchange of all the supposedly naturally emerging specifications and limits of the individual with conscious self-determination. The perspective of this goal makes possible the elimination of all historically and nationally limited knowledge and offers opportunities for judging at the level of the "realm of reason".<sup>7</sup>

The liquidation of this conception and its radical, materialistic elimination do not proceed upon the level of abstract philosophical speculation, but are the product of the pitiless analysis by Marx of practical-political experiences. (Of course, certain theoretical influences, especially the significance of Feuerbach's influence, are certainly not to be underestimated.) During his Rheinische Zeitung days, Marx's political illusions were shattered. The young Marx had presupposed that only in the state do the material components become living members of the spiritual whole, and that only in the state is the social totality constituted, participation in the life of the social totality making the human being human. In terms of the problems of economic life, only certain restrictions on private property through political channels interested him. (With such measures he thought he could avoid rigid social classes.) For this reason the essence of his social programme consisted in radical, Jacobin-revolutionary transformation and democratizing the state.

---

and that it overcomes these defects only when it falls into them. What resists it and what it fights is always the same thing, only in an inverted form." Marx, ibid., pp. 64-65.



But during his journalistic activity, during his immediate contact with social reality, the much more intricate interdependence of politics and economics, the domination of economic phenomena over political ones became clear to him. At this time he grasped the problem of the "poor classes", which "in the conscious structuring of the state had so far found no suitably important position."<sup>8</sup> When, therefore, in the Spring of 1844 he fell into a politico-philosophical crisis, he returned with his characteristic self-criticisms to the investigation of his premises, to a critical analysis of the Hegelian philosophy and especially of its theory of the state in his manuscript, Toward a Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right. In the light of his newly acquired revolutionary conviction, which, although still in a generalized form, demanded besides political reconstruction also the transformation of bourgeois society, as well as the destruction of the alienated private character of its spheres as the precondition of any democratic reform,\* Marx now criticized the Hegelian conception of society; and further, Hegelian idealism and its dialectic in general. All this was made possible by the view that, as the producer of historical progress, there emerges for man no longer just intellectual-critical activity directed towards political life but revolutionary practice transforming the material conditions of life.

\* "The elimination of bureaucracy can only consist in the fact that the universal interest really . . . becomes a particular interest, and this is only possible because the particular interest really becomes universal." Ibid., pp. 457-458. "In democracy the state as particular is only particular; as universal, it is the real universal, i.e., it has no specification in distinction from its other content. Most recently the French have conceived this in such a way that in genuine democracy the political state collapses. This is correct insofar as it qua political state, as constitution, is no longer valid for the totality." Ibid., p. 435.



Accordingly, his attitude towards speculative-philosophical knowledge is also revised. In his dissertation Marx viewed this knowledge, precisely because of its critical character, as "genuine cognition." Insofar as philosophy transforms the specifications ascribed by ordinary thought to external objects, the categories into independently existing things, and regards these according to their essential place and role in the evolution of self-consciousness, i.e. grasps their "concept", philosophy offers a critical yardstick by which it is henceforth objectively possible to measure individual things as appearances of these specifications of self-consciousness; philosophy makes it possible critically to contrast essential being freed from accidentals from objects as merely sensuous. The evaluation of this method now passes into its opposite; Marx rejects it in his manuscript of Kreuznach, precisely because of its argumentative character. Since speculative thought separates categories from their proper bearers and subjects, and considers them in themselves; it can give them a meaning only by presupposing a definite relation among them in which each is determined by the others. There thus emerges a fully formed, closed, a priori system of abstract ideas. Their separation from reality, however, which Marx was earlier inclined to explain as the necessary separation of Critical Philosophy from its object (though not in so sharp a form), makes any actual criticism impossible. Such thinking locked up in itself, if it now in default of inner content turns to reality and poses as true knowledge, lacks any criterion for distinguishing, in the immediately given, the real and the necessary from the accidental. The only criterion and only requirement is that the object can be resolved into some abstract concept. In this way emerges the "uncritical positivism" and the "pseudo-criticism" of thought. For ordinary thinking philosophic thought can appear to be critical, because it conceives the object as the incorporation of an abstract quality, and accordingly its concept as formed from the object can diverge sharply from the concept in everyday use. In its essence, however, this method is apologetic, because it conceives the



object which is supposed to be the realization of self-consciousness, of Mind, etc., just as it appears in everyday experience, and then accepts and thereby authorizes it. Further, such knowledge is formal and unable to disclose the proper nature of the object, and therefore is not knowledge at all.

The only kind of knowledge that can become truly critical is that which follows the specific logic of its object and reveals the real inner contradictions of things. This conception of scientific knowledge is still quite widespread. The method of idealist dialectics is by no means completely overcome. Our concern is not merely with the fact that we can find formulations in Marx that reflect it, but also that Marx still later in the Manuscripts quite frequently represents the result of an historical process (that emerges from a long series of intermediate steps) as the immanent goal of the process, as its essence, in order to obtain a critical measure of the concrete historical phenomena of the process which contradict this essence and are alienated from it. The positive solution to this question, the elaboration of a scientific methodology, becomes the central quest of the later philosophical interest of Marx.

The conception we have been dealing with reflects in great measure the influence of Feuerbach. The two thinkers' conceptions, however, diverge even at this time, and especially on this theme. According to Feuerbach the instrument for the knowledge of reality is careful, truly human sense perception,<sup>9</sup> while Marx proceeds from rational-logical, discursive knowledge, seeing it as capable of disclosing the "logic of the thing". The differences between Marx and Feuerbach are sharply evident, e.g., in the differing evaluations of the Hegelian notion of the "path from the abstract to the concrete", that methodological requirement according to which scientific knowledge must move from the abstract to the concrete. Feuerbach sees in it nothing but the indirect, inconsistent theological recognition of the reality of the world perceived by the senses; he rejects it for the reason that knowledge must grasp





the given in its immediacy, revealing every specification in its concrete constitution. Thought, then, cannot reach genuine independence; it has its justification only as a moment which enriches and trains sense perception, not in isolation from this.\* Categories in themselves are merely instruments of cognition. Marx, on the other hand, criticizes Hegel for the reason that Hegel does not realize the methodological principle he formulated, viz. he offers only the illusion of its realization. While the process of thought in Hegel apparently leads from the one-sided to the totality, exactly the opposite is the case. Hegel identifies the concrete phenomenon with its individual specification; he does not reconstitute the concrete as the complicated totality of abstract specifications, but attains merely the elaboration of the abstract specification. This is often unnecessary because it is given as a finished social product anterior to all scientific thought. Marx states, "in reality Hegel did nothing except dissolve the 'political constitution' into the universal abstract idea of 'organism', but in appearance and according to his own view he evolved the specific out of the universal idea."<sup>10</sup>

Just as Marx did later, Feuerbach departed from the Hegelian philosophy for which it is society primarily that stands contrasted to the individual, and not the contrary. He attempted, moreover, to give a materialist interpretation of social substance, which

\* The task of philosophy, of knowledge in general, does not consist in departing from the perceptible, i.e. the real, but in coming to them, not in transforming objects into thoughts and representations, but in making that which is invisible to ordinary eyes visible, i.e. objective. . . . Men see things first only as they appear to them, not as they are. Men see not things themselves but only their images of them; they intrude their own being into things; they do not distinguish the object and their representation of it."  
Ludwig Feuerbach, Sämtliche Werke, op. cit., pp. 305-306.



Hegel had seen in essence within the morality, customs, religion, laws, and, above all, in the political character of any era and people. Feuerbach believed he could find this foundation in the material dependence human beings exhibit, so that the individual is unable to live alone apart from other men. Feuerbach did not submit this material dependence to any concrete, historical investigation.<sup>11</sup> Thus social specifications appear for him as specifications of nature produced by training.

Feuerbach recognizes that thought is the highest expression and incorporation of his humanity. In thought the individual man appears as the one who incorporates the human species, and, therefore, Feuerbach has reservations about thought. In thought the species appears as species, as free of any natural dependence and precondition. Accordingly, the individual who thinks is per se completely free and independent of any natural or social relationship. As a result, when it is separated from the totality of the life of the species, the highest product of the development of the species can become the negation of the reality of the human being, of his social and natural dependence. For this reason, Feuerbach saw in abstract thinking the subjective condition of all alienation. Sensuous intuition, on the contrary, raises itself above individual, egoistic need, conceiving the object as the beautiful, as the specific manifestation of the essence of Nature and man, as the affirmation of the essence of man. In this it remains passive and dependent upon its object: this is the only correct form and the only means of human knowledge.

To Marx the foundations of Feuerbach's conception were alien and remained so. In his dissertation and in articles in the Rheinische Zeitung he completely shares Hegel's views on the primacy and also on the character of social substance. He then seeks to offer a materialist explanation for the social totality, for which economic phenomena, which were left untouched in Feuerbach's naturalistic conception of society, serve as the point



of departure.

In Marx's Critique of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right, we by no means encounter a straightforward solution. On the one hand, Marx takes a definite position against the mystification of the Hegelian philosophy which separated society from distinct individuals, positing it as an independently existing thing, permitting it to function as the hidden creator of history. Only individuals, conceived in their immediate material reality, are the real creators of history. However, the materialist explanation of history's obedience to law, affirmed by Hegel, and of the universal social relations and processes which come about "behind the back" of human activities are by no means excluded. Unlike Hegel, however, this materialist explanation cannot consist only in the reduction of the phenomena of the state and political life to civil society, especially when no answer is available to the question of how the alteration of its economic determinants can be explained. At this time, this later question had not been submitted to any investigation by Marx. This is why the above work as well as the slightly later writing, On the Jewish Question, contain many idealist formulations alongside materialist ones for answering such concrete questions as the relationship of the state and civil society, the evolution of the state and its consequences, etc. At the same time, individual problems are dealt with by appealing to the evolution of the "human spirit" (Geist) and self-consciousness."\*

\* Such idealist formulations can be seen in On the Jewish Question: "But the religious spirit cannot be really secularized. For what is it but the non-secular form of a stage in the development of the human spirit? The religious spirit can only be realized if the stage of development of the human spirit which it expresses in religious form, manifests and constitutes itself in its secular form. This is what happens in the democratic state." Karl Marx: Early Writings, trans T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 20.



In this period, Marx also contrasts scientific-theoretical knowledge sharply with material activity. Practical need appears as a merely biological, egoistic interest for which the inner essence, the specific nature of the object, is completely indifferent: an interest which measures the object externally according to its own standard, or considers it by means of "rules of some kind of convention", while theory conceives it as proceeding "in and for itself". Practical need is passive, its development can be stimulated only through change in exterior conditions, and thus it cannot serve as a foundation and explanation of theoretical notions that constantly develop.<sup>12</sup>

The young Marx arrived at a consistent materialist view of the world, social theory, and epistemology, only by completely renouncing this estimate of practical activity. His philosophic materialism is completed only with the disclosure of the role of labor in shaping man and history. This shift begins in the summer of 1844 in Marx's Paris Manuscripts.

INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

BUDAPEST

#### Notes

1. Marx-Engels-Gesamtausgabe (hereafter referred to as MEGA), Abt. I, Bd. I, Hbd. 1, p. 138.
2. Ibid., p. 23.
3. Ibid., p. 119.
4. Ibid., p. 51. "The absoluteness and freedom of self-consciousness





is the principle of Epicurus' philosophy, even if self-consciousness is conceived only under the form of the singular. If the abstract individual self-consciousness is posited as an absolute principle, all genuine and real science is eliminated, insofar as it is not the singular which governs in the nature of things. But at the same time everything else collapses which is related to the human consciousness as transcendent, and therefore belongs to the imaginative understanding."

5. Ibid., p. 144.

6. Ibid., p. 64.

7. Ibid., p. 81.

8. Ibid., p. 276.

9. "True and divine are those things which require no proof, which are immediately true through themselves, which immediately speak for themselves, immediately elicit the affirmation that they exist. . . . Only the sensible is entirely evident; only where the sensible begins all doubt and conflict cease. The secret of immediate knowledge is the perceptible." Ludwig Feuerbach, Philosophische Kritiken und Grundsätze; Sämtliche Werke, vol. II, p. 301.

10. MEGA, vol. I, p. 444.

11. "The mediate, intelligent, natural-historical unity of the species and the individual is founded only upon gender. I am human only as man or woman." Ludwig Feuerbach, Das Wesen des Christentums, Berlin, 1956, vol. I, p. 246.

12 " . . . Das praktische Bedürfnis, dessen Verstand der Eigennutz ist, sich passiv verhält und sich nicht beliebig erweitert, sondern sich erweitert findet mit der Fortentwicklung der gesellschaftlichen Zustände." MEGA, vol. I, 1, p. 604.



Stéfan Anguélov

## "Reflection and Practice"\*

As Engels once said, the fundamental question of philosophy is the relationship of mind and being. This question has two aspects. First, which is primary, consciousness or being, and which is secondary? Second, can thought gain knowledge of being, i.e. is the world knowable or not? In the history of philosophy the many answers to these questions can be grouped into two main groups: the one materialist, the other idealist.

The materialist is not content to acknowledge the primary and objective existence of matter; for him truth resides in the correspondence of human thought with objective reality. The opposite viewpoint, idealism, asserts the primacy of spirit and consciousness, matter being secondary and only a function of them; for the idealists, knowledge is authentic if it conforms to certain rules of consciousness--knowledge is veridical when it is obvious (the evidence theory), or incontestably clear (Remke), or when it is useful (the Pragmatists), etc.

In the final analysis, it is easy to deduce that the problem of cognition amounts to the recognition or to the denial of the objective character of the reality known to us. One's attitude to this fundamental question is the touchstone of the philosophical position of any writer.

The foundation of the epistemology of dialectical materialism is constituted by the recognition of the objective world and the reflection of the world within human consciousness. But contrary to the older materialism, which was contemplative primarily, the Marxist philosophy uncovered the dialectical materialistic character of the knowing process;

\* Translated by Camille de Renty (with David H. DeGrood). Abridged for inclusion in this volume.



and for the first time it saw praxis (practice) as the foundation, the aim, and the criterion of cognition.

Repeatedly, whole groups of bourgeois philosophers have proclaimed that the theses of Marxist philosophy had been disproved. One may recall the futile attempts made by Mach's followers, who tried to go "beyond" materialism and idealism, to overcome the "narrowness" and the "dogmatism" of Marxism. During his lifetime, Lenin disproved the arguments of this empirio-criticism, a new variety then of subjective idealism. Lenin demonstrated that Mach and Avenarius, as well as their followers Bogdanov, Bazarov, Chernov, and a certain number of other revisionists (in the form of a "purely scientific" and "realistic" theory of reality), were reducing the objective world to a bundle of sensations, and human knowledge simply to a consciousness of these sensations.

More than half a century now has passed. Today idealistic philosophy confers new labels upon itself: neo-positivism, existentialism, and Neo-Thomism. While the Neo-Thomists are erecting a Chinese Wall between relative truths on the one hand (according to them "accessible" to science), and absolute truths on the other (which faith alone gives "access"); the existentialists declare that existence itself is man's essence (existence preceding it), and no object is possible without the subject. Whereas the neo-positivists substitute for the world of objective reality the notions of sensation and the terms and combinations of language, the phenomenologists invent a transcendental region situated "on this side" of the subject and object, which is neither material nor spiritual. Such thinkers, with firm though unjustified convictions, claim to have "refuted" and "surpassed" the materialistic theory of reflection. Nor can one leave out here philosophical revisionism.

Among the latest pretending to be Marxists, some of them gaining distinction for their extraordinary activity, are Henri Lefebvre, Leszek Kolakowski, Gajo Petrović, Mihailo Marković, Predrag Vranicki, Rudi Supek, Milan Kangrga, and many others.

The essence of all their theses can be summed up in this fundamental



assertion: they maintain that the theory of reflection is incompatible with Marxism. "Veridicity," Kolakowski maintains, "considered as that conformity of 'resemblance' between the human psychic state and a reality entirely independent of it, is in effect incompatible with the Marxist conception of the world. . . ."<sup>1</sup> Recently a group of Yugoslav philosophers have supported similar propositions. Reanalyzing the classical texts of Marxism, these authors strive to construct a theory of knowledge vastly different, in which the "subject-object" relation is thought of in a different light. Hence they arrive at a point of denying the existence of a Marxist theory of reflection, and attempt to oppose the category of "praxis" (practice) to that of "reflection."<sup>2</sup>

In effect, such an assertion means a total rejection both of dialectical materialism and Marxism in general. However, contemporary revisionists decline to acknowledge this. Displaying an abundant arsenal of ratiocinations and specious objections, these authors refuse to admit their deviation from Marxist doctrine, presenting themselves as "creative" Marxists.

When one studies closely the conceptions of the philosophers of revisionism, one sees appearing certainly (through the jumble of sophisms and the protestations of fidelity to "authentic" Marxism) idealist notions hostile to dialectical materialism. While V. Bazarov, the Russian disciple of Mach, had attempted, in his time, to "accomodate" Engels to empirio-criticism; contemporary revisionists are trying to "fit" Marx into the spirit of existentialism, pragmatism, neo-positivism, and Neo-Thomism. Here they are only the faithful disciples of Pierre Bigot, Sidney Hook, Jean Calvez, Jean-Paul Sartre, E. Tir, Y. Homes, E. Mounier, et al., all of whom try to model the young Marx in their own image.

Rejecting the fundamental thesis of Marxism, which states that matter possesses existence in its own right (external to and independent of human knowledge), the French revisionist Lefebvre proposes a "new" definition of matter: "To a coherent materialism, the term and concept 'matter' signifies the infinity of a given being."<sup>3</sup> In response to the question of the independence of its existence from the cognizing subject,





Lefebvre readily answers: "There is no object without a subject, no subject without an object: this conception must be understood in the framework of practical (social) activity, and not in the framework of pure knowledge."<sup>4</sup> According to the writer, this would be Marx's conception,

Thus, from Marxist positions, which assert that man humanizes nature in his evolution and the unreality of thought isolated from praxis; the revisionist philosophers tend to interpret these positions entirely falsely, when they maintain, groundlessly, that nature does not exist outside of the sphere of human activity, of praxis. "Separated from man," writes Kolakowski, "matter is nothingness. In this sense, to put the question about the existence of matter 'in itself' is tantamount to questioning oneself over the existence of nothingness."<sup>5</sup> In the same study, Kolakowski criticizes Kant for posing the question of the existence of a "thing in itself", something independent of the subject, asserting this to be nonsense. Further on, this author delivers his own thought: "If it is correct to say, from Marx's point of view, that consciousness is a representative process, it is even more correct to maintain, generalizing his thought, that things are reflected knowledge."<sup>6</sup> According to Kolakowski, matter is essentially that which resists human effort. He calls this "anthropological monism" or an "anthropocentrist" position, of which (according to him) the young Marx shared.

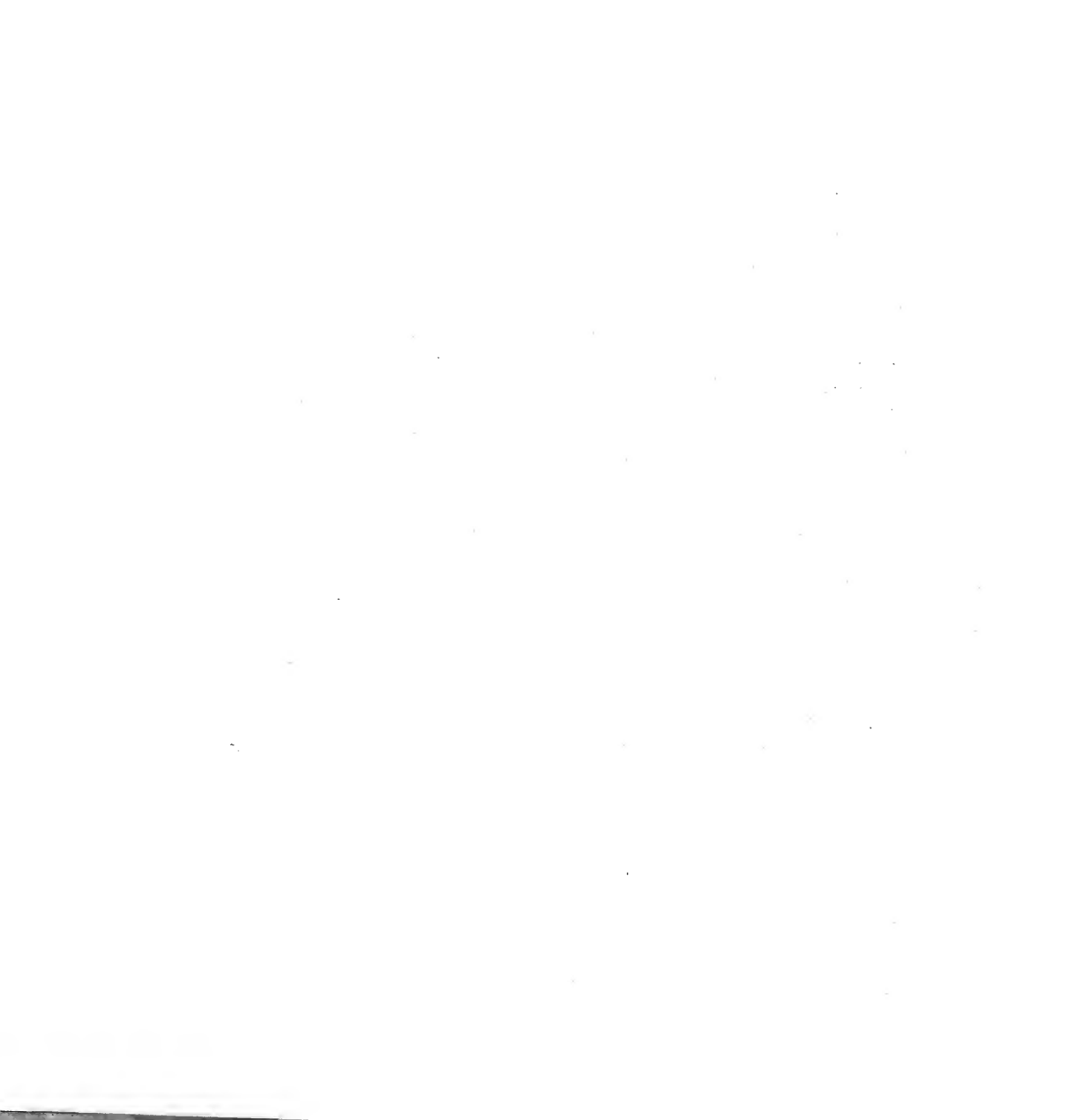
Moreover, Mihailo Marković defends a similar conception in his theory of knowledge. According to him, the theory of reflection is not really typical of Marxist philosophy, while the other alternative, praxis, would conform perfectly to the spirit of the original Marxist thought. Later we will see what Marković understands by "praxis." Right now, let us follow his statement. The thesis of praxis, he asserts, makes possible the foundation of direct knowledge of the external world, whereas positions oriented towards the reflection theory lead only to supposition or belief. With the premise of the theory of reflection, it is difficult to account for errors in judgment, mythical notions, or representations of objects which are later created in the



process of labor. According to Marković, Damianović, and Petrović, the theory of reflection is to be seen as classical "mimeisthai" (meaning an ordinary imitation of the natural environment), and therefore would be incompatible with the Marxist concept of man, in so far as he is a creature of praxis. G. Petrović, noticing that thoughts connected intimately with the theory of reflection are to be found not only in the works of Lenin and Engels, but also in Marx, hastens to add: "How could we make this theory tally, even in its ameliorated version, with the Marxist theory of man as a creature of praxis?"<sup>7</sup> Milan Kangrga arrives at some even more radical findings. He attributes to Marx an absurd idea: nature can be nothing more than an accomplished product of man, a product and result of human activity. To him, there is no dialectic outside of human praxis, for "without human activity and outside of it nothing is created and nothing produced."<sup>8</sup>

It is not difficult to see how all these writers, though claiming to be Marxists, in fact identify the object with the knowing subject. Thus, all cognition is autocognition. All these notions are but paraphrases of the arguments of subjective idealism, and the authors' pretensions to have elucidated the relation "subject-object" in a new way (starting from Marxist premises) are but neo-Fichtean nonsense. Fichte had fancied himself with having indissolubly tied the "ego" with the "environment," consciousness and the object; affirming that man cannot extricate himself from this predicament. This nonsense was taken over by Avenarius in the form of his "principal coordination." This same antiquated view is found again, under new labels, in existentialism, pragmatism, and even with certain Neo-Thomists. "Without man, nature makes no sense," the Neo-Thomist Calvez has recently written, "it has no notion, it is a chaos, indifferent and undifferentiated matter, and as a consequence, nothingness."<sup>9</sup> "The perception and the thing perceived, the representation and the thing represented," writes Professor Dimitre Mikhalcev, "are not two different things, but one and the same."<sup>10</sup>

The idealist essence of these philosophical conceptions clearly becomes evident in their definition of "matter." When one says that matter is the permanent possibility of sensation (in J. S. Mill), or that



it is a complex of "elements" (Mach), or finally that which gives resistance to human effort (Kolakowski); we remain within the bounds of agnosticism and idealism.

The dialectic of object and subject in practice, does not imply a necessary mutual coordination among them, as the contemporary critics of Marxism pretend. The subject and object are to be found in the relation of interaction, but they are relatively independent and non-equivalent. The object's existence, matter's existence, nature's, independent of man and humanity, is the premise of man's existence and of society.

The cognitive image and the object which is reflected by it constitute a paradoxical (antinomique) union. They are united, since the image gives us a faithful cognition of the object, it is a copy, a photograph of the object; however, they are contradictory (antinomiques), because the cognitive image and the object which it reflects are not one and the same thing. And this is true not only when we study the relation object-subject from a genetic point of view (i.e. when we establish that the object pre-existed prior to all consciousness, giving birth to consciousness in the course of its evolution), but also when the object of knowledge is conceived as a product of human activity. When thinking, we always possess not the object itself, but the image of it. "Our sensation, our consciousness," said Lenin, "is only an image of the external world, and it is obvious that an image cannot exist without the thing imaged, and that the latter exists independently of that which images it."<sup>11</sup>

Human knowledge is nothing other than the subjective image of the objective world.<sup>12</sup> This knowledge is subjective in the sense that it is an act of the subject, of man. The mind is objective when it gives a faithful knowledge of the world. Clearly, the object is reflected in our minds in various degrees of fullness and adequateness. Knowledge is a process by which we proceed from the unknown to the known, from superficial and one-sided knowledge to thorough and all-sided comprehension. Thought is not incompatible with the state of partial reflection, nor is it incompatible with the transformation of reality, nor with



the existence of mythic conceptions, etc. The existence of the anti-Marxist notions of the revisionists proves this. The character of the image of knowledge is a function of the totality of circumstances, in the first place, and one's social position, of one's world outlook, and one's class.

However, what criterion allows us to determine if the psychic content conforms to objective truth? Marxism provided a scientifically grounded answer to this question. According to Marx, Engels, Lenin, and their followers, the criterion of knowledge resides in praxis, that is, man's socio-historical, material activity, in the course of which man transforms the objective world to satisfy his needs.

What is the source of the ideas of the contemporary "innovators" of Marxism? The answer is the erroneous interpretation of the young Marx. Marx introduced praxis into epistemology, and argued for the notion that not only is man a creation of nature, but nature is also a creation of man. Essentially, we must find out what Marx and the Marxists mean by "praxis" and the "humanization of nature," showing also how the "innovators" interpret these same terms. Lefebvre, Kolakowski, Marković, and many others, again display commendable efforts in interpreting these concepts in the spirit of pragmatism and voluntarism, but not in their actual Marxist sense.

When we study, with a minimum of attention, the works of the early Marx and Engels during this early period of Marxist formation, we notice Marx's fundamental views (in his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844) are still in the making, though the seeds of later conceptions can be found, yet insufficiently developed. Moreover, the essence of that which characterizes Marx, as the creator of a new outlook, is not to be found in the imperfections of these early works but in their aspirations: the critique of bourgeois political economy, constructing in a general way a new materialist conception of history. This tendency is clearly expressed in Marx's Theses on Feuerbach, and in Marx and Engels' German Ideology, and their Holy Family.

Transcending the imperfections of mechanical and contemplative materialisms, Marx uncovered the active aspect of human consciousness





and highlighted the role of practical activity. In his Theses on Feuerbach, Marx stressed that it was idealism, not materialism, which had brought forward the active aspect of consciousness. Marx urged that materialism ought to stress this also, but on a different plane, not on the abstract and mythical level of idealism, but in regards to the sensuous activity of man (praxis). Man's practical activity is many-sided: production, class struggle, scientific-experimental research, artistic creation, etc. The fundamental aspect of all these activities, conditioning all other forms, is material production.

As Marx indicates, man knows by acting, by transforming the world. For him praxis is not only the criterion of truth; it constitutes the basis and goal of knowing. At first, men broke the nut to separate the edible almond from the shell, and only later did the intellectual operation known as "analysis" appear. Thus man's mind was indissolubly bound to his working activities; only later was cognition separated from them, rising to the theoretical plane, cognition gaining a relative independence.

How does this relative autonomy of thought express itself? Being the reflection of the objective world and in its appearance on the level of practical activity, consciousness exerts an active influence on the being which engenders it. The active role of consciousness manifests it first of all at the time of the determination of the possible orientation of practical activity. The "transformation" of the object on the ideo-intellectual plane precedes its material transformation. Here we see arise the essential difference between the practice of man and animal activity.

The subjective aspect of praxis is not restricted to the direct influence brought about by the subject's consciousness upon his transforming activities. In the unfolding of practical activity, the natural environment surrounding man, constituting an indispensable condition of his existence, tends to become a human environment more and more. In so far as practical activity assumes a fundamentally social character, man's environment (using Marx's expression, "humanized nature"), being the objective result of accomplished practical activity,



can be said to represent the material incarnation of man's social essence. The tools of production, for example, arise in the development of practical processes, not as a result of nature's evolution, but as material objects in which are objectified the results of conscious and creative activity on the social level; already accomplished in the past, and for that reason assuming well-defined social meanings.

Besides the subjective aspect, praxis possesses an objective side whose importance is decisive. As far as praxis is concerned, subject and object are interactive, as material realities. This interaction is realized in conformity to objective laws independent of the subject and its consciousness. Consciousness possesses a relative autonomy only, manifesting itself, among other things, in the search into various possibilities for the utilization of one or another aspect of the action of objective laws. Orienting and regulating praxis is always limited within the framework of the objective world. Within practical activity, only those goals corresponding to objective laws, to objective reality, are realizable.

Work, experience, and practical activity constitute the origin of thought, which owes to them not only its formation but also its continued existence. All the logical operations of mind always find their sanction in the evolution of social practice, revealing as well the historical character of their contents. Praxis, in establishing the veridicity of its abstractions, on the one hand, completes the process of knowing, on the other, determines its evolution; for the final stage of the gnosiological cycle can always be considered as the initial stage of a new and higher cycle. Besides these features, praxis sets the tasks of theorization, and constitutes the basis of knowing. Simultaneously, it is the goal of knowing, for it is not the free play of the mind; and it is the means, the organ, of man acting on the concrete plane, because man can only exist by transforming his milieu and adapting it to his needs. We must acknowledge the objective character of praxis as essential and decisive. Neglecting the objective, dialectical character of praxis, denying its essential aspects, by bringing out its secondary aspects, inevitably leads to subjectivism and arbitrary theory.



Idealism has concentrated its speculations on the subjective aspect of man's practical activity. By considering these subjective aspects on an absolute plane, separating them from their existing, objective base, the subjective idealists render praxis as something fundamentally arbitrary, dependent wholly upon consciousness. Such subjectivistic and voluntaristic views were held by Berkeley, Fichte, and the followers of Mach. Today, these same conceptions are revived by the pragmatists, existentialists, neo-positivists, and contemporary revisionists.

Lenin was not content just to refute the Machist theories. He drew our attention to the fact that systems using terms such as "experience" and "praxis" can conceal equally either materialist or idealist philosophy.

In so far as we are Marxists, it is our duty to examine the manner in which idealists juggle terms such as "experience" and "practice," to bring out the true sense they assign to them. Thus, the pragmatists proclaim that their philosophy is completely foreign to "abstractions," to "metaphysics," and to "idealism," for this outlook exalts life, practice. What do the pragmatists mean by "practice"? This concept means for them inner experience, what they call "pure experience." Pure experience splits into subject and object. Therefore, pragmatism includes in the notion of "practice" the entirety of man's psychic life, including dreams, superstitions, etc. Pragmatists such as Jim Kork and Sidney Hook go so far as to "discover" an identity of conception of practice for both Marx and John Dewey. Contemporary revisionists commit themselves to a similar task: "demonstrating" that Marx, fundamentally, was not a Marxist, but a pragmatist.

The revisionists reason thusly: since human knowing occurs within the process of praxis, there is introduced in cognition, a subjective element which is bound to one's system of perception and to social conditions and necessities. Furthermore, since man always acts consciously, praxis is essentially a socially conscious activity. This affirmation in itself is perfectly valid. But the revisionists commit a fatal error in making invalid inferences from a correct proposition: in effect, they conclude that we cannot speak either of the "absolute



autonomy" of reality or of the existence "in itself" of praxis.

These authors' attempts to substitute "praxis" for "reflection" bring them inescapably to the position of subjective idealism. They themselves seem to have realized this by "taking their distance" from idealism. Thus, Marković asserts that the adoption of his "anthropological" positions does not lead to idealism, since the notion of praxis's content necessarily implies an object; for praxis unfolds on something, and by so doing always entails modifying a thing.

These verbal acrobatics omit the essential: the explicit recognition that the object of knowledge exists independently of the gnosiological process. Nature exists long before praxis, and exists independently of man. Man did not create nature; he influences and transforms it. Man's practical activity assumes a socio-historical character, and, for this reason, it cannot be reduced to sensuous elements, nor to the formal elements of cognitive activity.

The revisionists commit still another error: from the fact that man acts as a conscious being in the course of his practical activity, one cannot strictly infer that consciousness is identical with one's being. In the course of their production and their mutual contacts, people are not always aware of the social relations they create, nor of the laws governing the development of these relations. In his critique of Bogdanov's anti-Marxist theory of the identity of social being and social consciousness, Lenin emphasized explicitly that, though the producer in the area of the world's economy is conscious of the fact that he is introducing one modification or another in technical production, he is by no means aware of the fact that he is thus modifying social being. Man's activity on the social plane (economic life, generation of the human species, production and exchange of goods, etc.) creates a causal chain of events which is objectively indispensable, but which is entirely autonomous as regard to social consciousness.

Contemporary revisionists are not at all embarrassed in presenting their subjective idealist conceptions as Marxist. However, considering the fact that their conceptions are inconsistent with the classics of Marxism-Leninism, they attempt to extricate themselves from this





antinomy by putting forward even more captious arguments. As Kolakowski holds: "Our attempt to explicate that which, in our view, is the fundamental principle of the epistemology of Marx, we are brought to a very simple conclusion: Marxism in its process of formation has formulated the matter in an embryonic state, to which, in the course of evolution of thought stemming from Marx, radically different conceptions were substituted by Engels, and specially by Lenin."<sup>13</sup>

The founders of Marxism are Marx and Engels. In their first works, edited in common, they submitted the ideological heritage of classical German philosophy to an exhaustive criticism, and, based on the revolutionary practice of the proletariat and on the evolution of science, created a materialistic dialectic for the philosophical foundation of their new conception of the world. Later on, when Marx had begun his research on Capital, the two friends decided to divide their work; accordingly, Engels undertook to carry on the philosophic polemics. It is equally well known that Marx, far from being against Engels' published philosophical essays, entirely shared Engels' conceptions; Marx revised Engels' manuscript Anti Dühring, and even edited the economic section of this work.

Lenin was a great disciple of Marx and Engels, continuing their work. Thus, one can raise the question of the motives of those revisionists who strive to oppose Lenin to Marx and Engels. It seems necessary to them in order to mask as Marxism their subjective idealist notions. Their motive is clear: under the mask of Marxism, they fight against it. This is actually one of the principal methods of struggling against the world socialist system and the international communist movement.

The future belongs to communist militants, because they are guided by the victorious doctrine of Marxism-Leninism in their practical activity; also because their work wins the hearts of the ordinary people of the world. Obviously, this does not mean that Marxism has solved all problems, nor that there are no longer controversial questions in philosophy. It means that following Marxism we come closer and closer to the truth (without necessarily exhausting it); while following other course, Lenin



teaches us, only brings confusion and error.

SOFIA, BULGARIA

NOTES

1. Leszek Kolakowski, "Karol Marks i klasyczna definicja prawdy", Studia filozoficzne; Warsaw, # 2, 1959, p. 59.
2. Gajo Petrović, "Marxism versus Stalinism", Praxis: Zagreb, # 1, 1967, p. 68.
3. Henri Lefebvre, Problèmes actuels du marxisme, Paris, 1958, p. 21.
4. Ibid., p. 42.
5. Op. cit., p. 53.
6. Ibid., p. 58
7. Praxis, # 1, 1967, p. 68. Cf. Naša stvarnost, ##11-12, 1960, p. 582.
8. Naša stvarnost, ##11-12, 1960, p. 585.
9. Jean-Yves Calvez, La Pensée de Karl Marx, Paris, 1956, p. 380.
10. Dimitre Mikhalev, La Philosophie en tant que Science, Sofia, 1946, p. 531.
11. V. I. Lenin, Materialism and Empirio-Criticism, p. 69. In Collected Works (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1962).
12. Cf. Todor Pavlov, Théorie du Reflet, Sofia, 1962, pp. 145-249, 413-774.
13. Leszek Kolakowski, op. cit., p. 66.



Mihailo Marković,

"Human Nature and Social Development"\*

The fundamental assumption of all revolutionary thought is that it is possible to build up a genuine community of free individuals who have equal opportunities for development, creative work and satisfaction of their basic material and spiritual needs. The traditional utopian way of justifying it was its derivation from an overly optimistic conception of human nature.

Partly directly, partly mediated by German classical philosophy, the optimistic spirit of the Enlightenment found its place in the thought of Marx. It is true, Marx rejected the then contemporary concept of human nature as abstract and ahistoric. One of the implications of his dialectical approach might have been the discovery of internal, contradictory features in the Gattungswesen of man: good and evil, sociability and class egoism, rationality and powerful irrational drives, creativity and destructivity, etc. Marx's very description of early capitalism implicitly suggests the idea that something must have been basically wrong with man if he was able to build up such kinds of social relations. His description of early communism is surprisingly realistic: "Crude communism [is] the culmination of universal envy and leveling down.... Universal envy setting itself up as a power is only a camouflaged form of cupidity which re-establishes itself and satisfies itself in a different way."<sup>1</sup> And still, in spite of the fact that both his philosophical method and his empirical knowledge pushed him toward a recognition of the dark side in human nature, Marxism stood ambiguously, with one pole in the Enlightenment, with the other in the 20th Century, and the dilemma which he had faced remained unsolved. The dilemma could be formulated in the following

\* Article abridged for inclusion in this volume.



way: If the human essence really is "the totality of social relationships,"<sup>2</sup> then, this is a concrete and historical conception embracing all basic contradictions of its time. However, in this case, the question arises: Is there a human nature in general or is it relative to a specific historical epoch? If it does not make sense to speak about human nature in a general sense, with respect to the whole history of mankind, then the concept becomes not only relativistic but also purely descriptive; it is value-neutral and inadequate as an anthropological basis for an activist and a critical social thought and praxis. A historically given totality of social relationships can be critically assessed and transcended only when confronted with a vision of possible, more human social relationships, which presupposes a general value-concept of human nature.

But, on the other hand, if a general and honorific concept of human nature is assumed as the fundamental criterion of all critical assessment and ultimate goal of human praxis, then there is a serious danger of a naive, romantic and utopian idealization of man.

There is no doubt that for Marx a general idea of human nature was not only possible but necessary. He draws a distinction between "constant drives which exist under all conditions and which can be changed only in the form and direction they take" and the relative drives and appetites which "owe their origin to a definite type of social organization."<sup>3</sup> Then, arguing against Bentham in Capital, Marx said, he who "would criticize all human acts, movements, relations, etc. by the principle of utility must first deal with human nature in general, and then with human nature as modified in each historical epoch."<sup>4</sup>

When we study carefully Marx's early anthropological writings, we must come to the conclusion that evil is excluded from his concepts of the human essence and human nature and referred to an historically transient phase of alienation. While there still exists private property, exploitation, wolfish relations among men, irrationality, selfishness, greediness, envy, aggressiveness, etc., man is alienated from his essence. These negative features of empirical man - such as





they have existed so far in history - are not part of human nature; as long as they characterize human relations, man is not yet truly human. However, "communism is the positive abolition of private property, of human self-alienation, and thus the real appropriation of human nature through and for man. It is, therefore, the return of man himself as a social, i.e. really human being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous development."<sup>5</sup>

Although Marx (contrary to the often repeated objections of his critics) did not consider communism the ultimate goal of history but only "the necessary form and the dynamic principle of the immediate future"<sup>6</sup> he did say that communism was the "definitive resolution of the antagonism between man and nature and between man and man."<sup>37</sup>

The experiences of 20th century man no longer give him reason to believe that evil in man exists only in the sphere of "facticity", and only in the time which preceded genuine humane history.

Our century will enter history not only as an age of technological rationality, efficiency, and of considerable liberation, but also as an age of an incredible eruption of human irrationality and bestiality. The scope and character of bloodshed and mass madness in the two World Wars, because of racism, during Stalin's purges, yesterday in Korea, the Congo and Algeria, nowadays in Vietnam, can no longer be explained by the romantic, dualistic picture of a latent positive essence and a transient bad appearance. Evil must lie very deep. Obviously, it is also a latent pattern of human behavior, which is the product of the whole previous history of the human race, always ready to unroll as soon as favorable conditions arise. It will certainly be transmitted to many future generations and will need a very long period of time to vanish in its present forms.

What further complicates the picture is a variety of new unexpected forms of evil. Life in abundance and comfort has removed much suffering, illness, fear, primitive forms of struggle, and oppression; but it has created a whole new pathology. The most developed societies have the highest percentage of suicide, mental illness, rape, juvenile delinquency, drug addiction, and alcoholism.



Industry and civilization have made man more rational, powerful and efficient in some important spheres of human life, but at the same time they have reduced warmth, sincerity, solidarity, and spontaneity in human relations. Emotional hunger in material affluence, desperate loneliness amidst the crowd, boredom in spite of a huge variety of entertainment for sale, utter powerlessness amidst gadgets which multiply our senses and extend our hands - that is the situation to which modern civilized man often reacts by developing strongly aggressive and destructive habits.

Another surprising and indeed alarming 20th century experience is an obvious deterioration of motives and a sharp moral decay within the leadership of many victorious revolutionary movements. For most ordinary participants of those movements the phenomenon was so astounding that they never grasped what happened. By now the sociological dimension of this process is clear: it is the transformation of the revolutionary avant-garde into a privileged bureaucratic elite, and it takes place whenever the society as a whole is not sufficiently developed and integrated. The anthropological dimension, though, remains obscure if only positive features have been projected into the notion of human essence. That great revolutionaries, makers of history, could have been tragically defeated due to a general immaturity of historical conditions sounds plausible. That so many of them were able to become great demagogues and tyrants seems incompatible with the whole traditional utopian anthropology.

The alternative offered is negative, pessimistic utopian thought: evil is a permanent, constitutive feature of human life. There is constantly in man: anxiety, fear, hatred, envy, egoism, feelings of guilt, lust for self-affirmation and power. All modern culture: psychoanalysis, social anthropology, philosophy of existence, surrealism, expressionism and other trends of modern literature and of the arts have strongly emphasized this darker side of human nature. Thus a strong anti-Enlightenment and anti-rationalist attitude has emerged and prevailed in many countries, especially in both immediate post-war periods. That is why, nowadays, any projection of a happier and better



future society must answer the question: Is it still possible to believe in man, is he not basically irrational and sick and lost to unknown, uncontrollable, evil forces in himself, which, like Furies, destroy every good intention, every noble project?

The only answer which can be given by a modern dialectical thinker is: stop considering man as a thing! He is neither good nor bad. It is not true that there is a logos of historical process which will inevitably make empirical man increasingly similar to an ideal harmonic, all-round entity. It is also not true that man be confronted by such a chaotic world, outside and within himself, that all his conscious striving to change, to create his world and himself anew, were a labor of Sisyphus.

Such views are false because all known social laws hold only under definite conditions and with many deviations in individual cases. While these conditions last and while the individual is atomized and isolated, he has no power to change the laws. However, associated individuals can, within the limits of their historical situation, change the conditions and create a new situation in which new laws will hold. In spite of considerable uncertainty and all possible surprise for man whenever such a radical change takes place, at least some implications of the conscious collective engagement might be predicted, as both historical process and human nature have a definite structure, no matter how many-valued, contradictory, and open for further change. That is why the second extreme conception is also not acceptable. Human freedom cannot be construed (à la Sartre) as a total lack of any fixed content in man, as a lack of being something, therefore a burden and a yoke. The world is not condemned to stay eternally absurd as Camus believed. Man is not a complete stranger in his world, and he differs from Sisyphus in so far as he is able to change both the world and his own nature. At least some stones remain at the brow of the hill. Furthermore, in some historical moments large masses of people act in a way which leads to considerable modifications in human nature.

Change is possible because human nature is nothing else than a very complex and dynamic whole full of tensions and conflicts among



opposite features and interests.

There is, first, a discrepancy and an interaction between interests, drives and motives belonging to different levels of socialization: individual, group, generation, nation, class, historical epoch, mankind as a whole. Thus, great personalities by their character, their exceptional influence on the behavior of their class, nation, generation and sometimes of the whole epoch, contribute to the constitution of human nature as a concrete universal. Vice-versa, one of the fundamental functions of culture is to make individuals interiorize and appropriate universal human values in a particular local, regional, national, class form.

Second, there are in man internal contradictions between positive and negative, good and evil, rational and irrational, desire for freedom and reluctance to assume responsibility, creative and destructive, social and egoistic, peaceful and aggressive. Both are human, and it is possible for these conflicting features to survive indefinitely. But it is also possible that man will act during a prolonged period of time in such a way that one pole would prevail over the other. We have a chance to choose, within certain limits, what kind of man we are going to be. While practically bringing to life one of the possible futures, we at the same time consciously or involuntarily mould our own nature by fixing some of our traits, by modifying others, by creating some entirely new attitudes, needs, drives, aspirations, values.

An historical fact which is often overlooked is that some values which have been very important in the recent past lose their sense and evoke satiety and revolt among the new generation. In such a moment a sudden mutation in human behavior can be observed. This is especially the case with those values which had originated in powerlessness and all kinds of privation, and which have influenced human behavior for such a long time that many theoreticians took them for lasting characteristics of human nature. Thus for example:

(1) Material scarcity has brought about a hunger for goods, a lust for unlimited private property. This intemperate hunger, this typical mentality of a homo consumens developed especially when, for the first





time in history, in industrial society, conditions were created for mass satisfaction of material needs. However, it loses a good part of its meaning in the conditions of abundance in a post-industrial society. On the scale of values some other things become more important--and one can already observe this tendency in advanced industrial countries where people increasingly give preference to travelling and education over food and clothing.

(2) A situation of powerlessness and insecurity against alienated political power gave rise to a lust for power and obvious overestimates of political authority. This kind of obsession especially developed on a mass scale in the most civilized countries in our century, due to the introduction of various forms of semi-democracy, i.e. such a type of society in which political power is still alienated and established in a strict hierarchical order, but at the same time open to a much larger circle of citizens. On the other hand, the rise of the will to power is caused by the destruction of other values: it is a substitute for a will to spiritual and creative power, it is an infallible symptom of nihilism and decay. However, it loses any sense to the extent to which the basic political functions would be deprofessionalized and to a considerable degree decentralized, to the extent to which every individual would have a real possibility of participating in the processes of management.

(3) In a society in which a person is condemned to a routine technical activity--which was not freely chosen by him, and does not offer opportunity for the realization of his potential abilities, the motive of success naturally becomes the primum mobile of all human activity, whereas pragmatism takes the ground as the only relevant philosophy. Nevertheless, one can already envisage conditions under which basic changes in human motivation might take place. If an individual could have the real possibility to choose his place in the social division of labor according to his abilities, talents, and aspirations, if in general, professional activity could be reduced to a minimum, and to a function of secondary importance with respect to freely chosen activities in his leisure time; the motive of success would



lose its dominant position. Success would no longer be regarded as supreme and worthy of any sacrifice, but only as a natural consequence of something much more important. This more important and indeed essential thing is the very act of creation (no matter whether in science, art, politics, or personal relations), the act of objectification of our being according to "the laws of beauty," the satisfaction of the needs of another man, putting together a genuine community with the other man through the results of our action.

In general, scarcity, weakness, lack of freedom, social and national insecurity, a feeling of inferiority, emptiness and poverty, to which the vast majority of people are condemned, give rise to such mechanisms of defense and compensation as national and class hatred, egoism, escape from responsibility, aggressive and destructive behavior, etc. Many present-day forms of evil really could be overcome in a society which would secure for each individual satisfaction of his basic vital needs, liberation from compulsory routine work, immediate participation in decision-making, a relatively free access to the stores of information, prolonged education, the possibility to appropriate genuine cultural values, the protection of fundamental human rights.

However, we are not yet able to predict today which new problems, tensions, and conflicts, which new forms of evil, will be brought about by the so-called post-industrial society. For this reason, we should be critical towards any naive technicist optimism which expects all human problems to be solved in the conditions of material abundance.

A considerable improvement in the living conditions of individuals does not automatically entail the creation of a genuine human community in which there is solidarity, and without which a radical emancipation of man is not possible; because it is possible to overcome poverty and still retain exploitation, to replace compulsory work with senseless and equally degrading amusement, to allow participation in insignificant issues within an essentially bureaucratic system, to let the citizens be virtually flooded by carefully selected and interpreted half-truths, to use prolonged education for a prolonged programming of



human brains, to open all doors to the old culture and at the same time to put severe limits to the creation of the new one, to reduce morality to law to protect certain rights without being able to create a universally human sense of duty and mutual solidarity.

The key problem which mankind will have to face for another long period of time is: how to avoid that ruling over things does not, time and again, in every new social model, revert to ruling over people.

This problem is of fundamental importance for any radical vision of the future. The existence of alienated concentrated economic and political power in the hands of any ruling elite (warriors, private owners of the means of production, managers, professional politicians, or even scientists and philosophers) impedes any radical change in the sphere of human relationships. The division of people into historical subjects and objects would entail a hypertrophy of the apparatus of power, a conservation of the ideological way of thinking, a control over the mass media of communication, a limitation of political and spiritual freedom. Consequently, a permanent concentration of power in the hands of any particular social group would be an essentially limiting factor of the entire further development.

Fortunately, scientific and technological progress with all its far-reaching consequences in the economic, social, and cultural plane opens up possibilities for a radical supersession of all those institutions which in past history have served to rule over people (such as the state, political parties, army, political police, security service, etc.).

(a) These institutions are necessary to hold together, to protect, regulate, and direct society, only while it is dismembered and disintegrated, which is the case with all backward and even semi-industrial societies. While there is a multitude of clashing particular interests, of various enterprises and economic branches, various regions and nationalities, a particular force is needed which will mediate, arbitrate and direct in the name of the general interest, although the general interest has not yet been constituted. However, one of the most important consequences of the present scientific and technological



revolution is the dissolution of all artificial barriers and the integration of small, relatively autonomous economic systems into big ones.

(b) Until recently the huge system required huge bureaucratic apparatuses. However, a profound change is taking place while we are entering a new phase of the technological revolution--the era of cybernetics. All routine administrative operations including the analysis of information and the search for optimal solutions within some given programmes will be performed much faster and in a more accurate way by electronic computers: a considerable part of bureaucracy would thus lose any raison d'être.

(c) Of all the various strata of contemporary bureaucracy, the only one which will surely survive are experts who make and test the alternative programmes within the framework of the goals, criteria, and established priorities of accepted general politics. It is essential that the only remaining professional politicians--highly skilled administrators and executives--be strictly subordinated to the elected political bodies. In their hands still remains a considerably influential power. In contrast to other citizens they have free access to all information. They have more time than others to study data and to try to establish certain general trends. By mere selection and interpretation of data, by the choice of certain possibilities and elimination of others in the process of the preparation of alternative solutions, finally, by a biased presentation of the results of accepted programmes, professional politicians will retain a considerable capacity to induce a desired course of action. In order to check this capacity and keep it within certain limits, several possibilities are open.

First, the subordination of professional politicians to the corresponding assemblies, and councils of self-government must be as complete as to allow full responsibility and immediate replacement of any official.

Second, professional political experts will have different roles and to a certain extent different interests. They should not be allowed to form a political block nor to control any kind of political





organization. Their function as experts will be best performed if they eliminate any personal or group loyalties and any ideological considerations, and if they would be obliged to follow the principle of technological rationality, i.e., to try to find the most adequate means for the goals laid down by their elected representatives.

Third, their entire work should be critically examined by independent political scientists. Future society must pay very serious attention to the scientific study both of politics in general and of actual political practice. Contrary to the present day "politicology," which is either apologetic or turned toward remote events, future society will need a political theory which will try to discover limitations in actual practice and which will not only study phenomena a posteriori, but will also make projections and prepare solutions parallel to the work of the experts in the state apparatus.

(d) The most important and indeed revolutionary change in the political organization of the future society should be concerned with the determination of general policies, with the definition of general goals, and the criteria of evaluation of possible alternative political programmes. It is not only the case that these key political functions must be radically democratized: the very idea of politics implicit in them will be fundamentally altered. According to Weber<sup>8</sup> politics is (1) the set of efforts undertaken in order to participate in ruling or in order to influence the distribution of power either among states or among different groups within one state, (2) this activity is basically the activity of the state, and (3) the state is "a relationship of domination of man over other men, based on the means of legitimate violence." Politics in this sense, as compared with true praxis, was characterized by Marx as the sphere of alienation. Political activity could then become praxis under the following conditions:

(1) Political praxis is the domination of man over things. The things, however, in the human world are the products of objectified human work. Therefore, political praxis is essentially a control and a rational direction of the social forces which, in fact, are les forces propres of the social man.



(2) The criterion of the evolution of various alternatives in this process is the satisfaction of authentic human needs in all their richness of specific manifestations in given historical conditions.

(3) The goal of political praxis is not the domination of one social group over the rest of society; therefore, this is an activity which has a universal character and concerns each human individual.

(4) Political praxis is not isolated from other modes of praxis. Contrary to alienated political activity, it is based on a philosophical vision of human nature and history; it need not violate moral norms; its choices presuppose a scientific knowledge of all real possibilities in the historical situation.

(5) Such an activity without subjugation, tutelage, and fear is extremely attractive. By participating in such an activity, the individual develops an important dimension of his social being and gets hold of ample space in which he can express many of his potential capacities and possibly affirm himself as a gifted, strong, and creative personality.

This conception of political praxis is far from being only a piece of pure imagination and of philosophical poetry. All those who have participated in a really revolutionary movement have experienced what politics could be, for at least a limited period of time, when it is not a monopoly of a privileged elite. The question arises, however: Is not every such attempt at the democratization and humanization of politics limited in time and eventually doomed to failure? Is it not possible only in the period of revolutionary transformation and destruction of the old power? Does not time and again a moment come when the principle of freedom has to be replaced by the principle of order, when a new social organization begins to function, when the revolutionary avant-garde becomes a new bureaucracy overnight? Is there not always the need for some kind of elite in a complex modern society?

The decisive, new historical fact relevant to this question is that the considerable reduction of compulsory work and production, which will take place on a mass scale in an advanced future society, will liberate enormous human energies and talents for political life. The general



education and culture, including political knowledge of these potential political "amateurs" need not be inferior to that of the "professionals." By participating in local communal life and in various voluntary organizations many of them have acquired a satisfactory experience in public relations and the art of management. It should also not be overlooked that due to the penetration of modern mass media of communication into most of its corners and secrets, politics has been demystified to a large extent, and many of its institutions and personalities are losing the magic charm they had in the past. Thus the old-time distance in competence between the leaders of political organizations and their rank and file, and, in general, between a political elite and the large masses of people is melting away. For the first time in history it becomes clear that in the social division of labor there is no need for a special profession of people who decide and rule in the name of others. Bureaucracy as an independent, alienated political subject becomes redundant.

The socialist movement until this moment did not succeed in developing a consistent and concrete theory about the transcendence of bureaucracy and about the political structure of the new society. This is the consequence of a really paradoxical development during the last two decades.

First, a series of revolutions took place in backward East European and Asian countries guided by a theory of democratic socialism, such revolutions being theoretically constructed in the conditions of relatively advanced Western capitalism. Marx would never call "socialism" an essentially bureaucratic society. He knew that in the initial phase of industrialization really communal social control over productive forces is not yet possible. That is why in his Grundrisse der Kritik des Politischen Oekonomie he stated explicitly that such a possibility will be created in an advanced society in which "the relations of production will become universal, no matter how reified," in which man will no longer be directly governed by people, but by "abstract reified social forces". Only then will the freely associated producers be able to put the whole process of social life under their conscious, planned control.



But this requires such a material basis "which is the product of a long and painful history of development."<sup>9</sup>

It is pointless to argue now to what extent Lenin and the Bolshevik Party were aware of the essential difference in the conditions in their country (1917-1922) and the conditions under which Marx's theory of self-government was applicable. The fact is that Lenin and his collaborators did not believe that socialist revolution in Russia would be successful without a revolution in the whole of Europe. The institution of Soviets, introduced already during the first Russian revolution in 1905, was a specific form of self-government. Unfortunately, by the end of the Civil War, there were no longer Soviets, no longer a strong, organized working class. In order to survive, in order to defeat the external enemy, counter-revolutionary forces, white terrorism, hunger, and to overcome total economic collapse, the Bolshevik Party had no other alternative but either to surrender or to proceed by military and other bureaucratic methods. While this dilemma was an historical necessity, nothing of the sort can be said about Stalin's crimes or about the purely ideological identification of this new type of post-capitalist bureaucratic society with socialism.

It follows then, that the revolutionary movement in Russia, China, and other underdeveloped countries did not develop a theory about the supersession of bureaucracy by the system of self-government, because historical conditions for such a radical change of the political structure did not yet exist.

Paradoxically enough, such a theory has not yet been developed by the "New Left" in much more favorable conditions. Due to the high level of material development, economic integration, education, and also to the considerable democratic achievements in the past, at least in some Western countries, bureaucratization in the post-capitalist development is by no means the only way. Instead of looking for alternative forms of political organization based on the principle of self-government, a widespread attitude in the Student Movement and among the New Left is distrust toward any kind of political institutions. This kind of attitude is easy to understand as a violent reaction to the process of





obvious degeneration of the revolutionary state in the victorious revolutions in the East. It involves, however, a mistaken generalization from experiences which have a specifically regional character. A dialectical denial of the state is much less, and at the same time much more, than a contestation totale; much less, because some of the functions and institutions of the state will have to survive and to be incorporated into the new political structure. Further, this is true because a total negation of the establishment is practically no negation at all. A real negation of the state is the abolition of its essential internal limit: monopoly of power in the hands of a particular social group, use of apparently legitimate violence in order to protect and promote the interests of this privileged elite. This abolition does not lead to anarchy and lack of any organized authority, but to the alternative of a really democratic system of management, without any external alienated power.

It is of essential importance to undertake every measure to preclude alienation of that limited power which is concentrated in the hands of central bodies of self-government. This power must be temporary (implying a necessary rotation of individuals in possession of political authority); it must not bring with it any permanent place in the hierarchy of power, and by no means any material privileges, any salary exceeding incomes of highly qualified and creative workers and scientists.

In order to hinder possible deformation of its political institutions, society in advance should undertake certain measures to protect itself from demagogy, lust for power, and potential "charismatic" leaders. Surely, the best protection is appropriate political education, development of a critical spirit, building up free and independent public opinion. This will be the most efficient way of promptly identifying these retrogressive political tendencies and securing mass resistance to them. The traditional, collective psychological attitude to glorify, to adore, to be always ready for a new myth and a new cult of personality should be replaced by an attitude of criticism and resistance to any potential Macht Mensch, to any authoritarian pattern



of behavior. In a future society this will be much easier to achieve than nowadays, not only due to new accumulated historical experience and greatly improved education, but also due to a new feeling of legal and economic security, which is, for most individuals, the indispensable psychological condition of a critical public participation.

Ruling people like things is the fundamental social evil produced by previous history. It is doubly evil because it degrades both the one who rules and the one who is being ruled.

This future will become practical human reality, only if some essential preliminary steps toward it are made at once, now.

UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE, YUGOSLAVIA

#### NOTES

1. Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, trans. by Bottomore; in Marx's Concept of Man by Erich Fromm (New York, 1961), p. 125.
2. Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach".
3. Marx, Heilige Familie, MEGA, V, p. 359.
4. Marx, Capital, vol. I, Chicago, 1906, p. 668.
5. Marx, Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, op. cit., p. 127.
6. Ibid., p. 140.
7. Ibid., p. 127.
8. Max Weber, Politik als Beruf, 1919.
9. Marx, Das Kapital, Bd. 1, Kap. 1 C 4.



Mihály Vajda,

"Nature, Society, and Praxis"

Characterized as a whole Marxism is, as Gramsci put it, the philosophy of praxis. In the XIth thesis on Feuerbach, Marx states the essence of this philosophy: "philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."<sup>1</sup> This famous thesis, however, can and has been interpreted in various ways.

Considered in isolation and independently of the meaning of praxis in Marx's works, the XIth thesis reduces to the statement that Marx's philosophy is a revolutionary one--it is an interpretation of the world meant to change it. But if Marx's thesis meant only that and no more, then Marxism would be just another philosophy, since it is not the first one to aim at the transformation of the world. French materialism in the 18th century was definitely revolutionary and politically active; it was definitely praxis-oriented and wanted to substitute a new, "correct" social order for the old one. But although politically radical, its revolutionary spirit was not philosophically revolutionary. To understand this a thorough analysis of Marx's concept of praxis is needed. In earlier materialist theories, praxis was something externally forced upon a pre-given reality. It transformed reality, but it had no relation whatsoever to its structure; ". . . reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object or of contemplation, but not as human sensory activity, practice, not subjectively."<sup>2</sup> For Marx praxis is not a principle opposed to and struggling with reality, but reality itself. In fact, Kant himself revealed the secret of previous kinds of materialism when he separated pure from practical Reason, thus restricting praxis to moral practice and to the preservation and realization of individual autonomy. Hence, if we identify reality with what is given, then praxis cannot be real.

When Marx regarded reality not as object but as praxis, as human



sensuous activity, subjectively, i.e. when he saw object and subject in reality as inseparable and identical, he also criticized idealism. Idealism, he says, naturally "does not know . . . real, sensuous activity as such."<sup>3</sup> Marx goes beyond all previous types of materialism and idealism by pointing out their essential identity, an identity found in their one-sidedness; that is to say, neither of them regards "human activity itself as objective activity."<sup>4</sup> For so-called philosophical materialism the object is given, while activity itself in its "dirty-Jewish form of appearance"<sup>5</sup> becomes only external; and, though idealism regards activity as the essence of reality, it does away with the objective side.

The central concept of Marxist philosophy, its point of departure and arrival, is praxis. In practice subjective and objective aspects form an inseparable unity. The dialectical identity of subject and object in praxis, furthermore, is to be regarded as an ontological and not as an epistemological statement. For the individual subject of cognition, reality, exists solely as object, that is, as a thing in itself existing "objectively", independently of the subject's cognitive activity. To avoid misunderstandings, which emanate even from Marxists, the following must be said, and must be absolutely clear. The subject is not an isolated subject with its discrete consciousness. At the very moment when the subject is considered to be an "abstract, isolated human being", social life becomes just as objectively "external" as nature. But, as Marx states it in the VIth thesis on Feuerbach, this isolated human being is a mere presumption: the presumption of the fetishistic consciousness. In the consciousness of the man of alienated society, of a society in which human relations appear in the form of relations between things, and thus, in which social movements seem to be activities of isolated persons, it is the isolated individual who appears as subject, as a bare subject; while the world in its totality, society and all of its members, just like nature, appear as objects, as bare objects. The idea which projects the essence of the real subject (that is, of the human species) beyond reality and which conceives reality in its totality (nature and society) as the object





of this transcendent subject must be regarded as the transcendent formulation of the appearance mentioned above (fetishistic consciousness). This appearance, however, does not cease to exist by being recognized as such. The consciousness of the fact that man's social relationships are the products of his own activities does not mean that man controls these relationships. Within these alienated social conditions, man's subjection still exists, even if he is not dependent upon forces outside him or upon laws independent of him, but on the products of his own activities. The recognition of the fetishistic appearance gives the subject the potentiality of bringing this dependency to an end through revolutionary activity, the potentiality of transforming the "natural" character of social laws.

The dialectical identity of subject and object is the secret of the revolutionary spirit, of Marxist philosophy; man can only get rid of the shackles of the fetishism of a "given" reality if he recognizes that the "given" reality is the product of his own activity. In this sense, even the most revolutionary bourgeois philosophy only "interprets" reality. Theoretically and practically, it only creates the preconditions for a possible realization of a political establishment adequate to already existing social conditions. Thus in reality, Marxist philosophy is the first to go beyond interpretation and to change the world, a world which is not already "given" but which is objectified human praxis itself. In this philosophy, praxis arrives at "self-consciousness", and that is why Marxism is a revolutionary turning-point in the history of philosophy.

We should not disregard the fact, however, that, by giving unity to object and subject, praxis is an objectifying activity. By discovering this, Marx succeeded in overcoming the limits of bourgeois materialism in a non-idealistic way. We have in mind this formulation: "it is the . . . production of material life which determines social life-processes". The means of production of material life presupposes nature, which is, in fact, only an object for the subject, for man. The identity of object and subject for Marx, in contrast to Hegel, is not realized in the Absolute Idea, not in a mystical way. Man is a



natural being who realizes and forms his own reality (social life) in the course of his everlasting "forcing back" of the boundaries of nature. Praxis, the identity of subject and object, is nothing else but social life growing out of nature.

Thus Marx's philosophic approach is the comprehension of objectivity, of reality, as subjective, sensuously real human activity, as praxis. Can this approach be made consistent with the "scientific" approach, which considers its subject matter to be exclusively objective?, which regards its subject matter as an objectivity independent of man, as movements of objects determined by causal relations and by objective laws equally independent of man?, which endeavors to exclude from its subject matter every anthropomorphic and anthropocentric feature?, whose specific features, in contrast to human areas of knowledge, expels teleology from its domain? Is it not the case that the objective "scientific" approach to reality thus has not removed itself from the approach of fetishizing objectivity, which had been the characteristic of materialism preceding Marx? Furthermore, do science and philosophy, then, necessarily complete one another in some sense?

The necessity and importance of science in human life and society can only be denied on the basis of some kind of romantic standpoint, according to which "human problems" can only be solved through the denial of technical achievements, by means of a return to some kind of ancient state of affairs where man and nature confronted each other without any mediations. But this can only be done by abolishing man's humanity. Even in the course of using the most primitive instruments, there is--consciously and unconsciously--a utilization of the causal relations of objective nature independent of man. When science constructs its deanthropomorphic view of nature, it does nothing but recognize, generalize, and systematize those presuppositions which are hidden in even the most primitive activities of our labor. It would be very difficult to believe that science has achieved its practical successes in spite of, and not as a result of, its approach. A really effective science became possible precisely as a result of the rise of the deanthropomorphic approach of Galileo.



Thus apparently, there are two conflicting approaches: that of philosophy, apprehending the object as subject, and that of "science", knowing only the object and assigning the subject the task of reflecting the object. The contrast between the two approaches is not only theoretical; modern types of Lebensphilosophie, e.g. existentialism, definitely reject the "scientific" approach, denying that science can describe reality, regarding science only as a tool, one which can be very useful for achieving certain results, but which has nothing to do with reality. Within Marxism, too, we can find views rejecting the "scientific" approach, throwing out any kind of facticity, any objective laws of reality, recognizing the positivist standpoint in such approaches. This tendency states that any assumption of an object without a subject springs from the fetishistic consciousness of the world of bourgeois society, from an alienated consciousness for which social relations between men appear in the form of relations between things.

This criticism can be applied not only to bourgeois social science but to such interpreters of Marxism, too, who, from the philosophy of praxis and from the dialectical unity realized in it, "stepped back to philosophical materialism" (Gramsci). This interpretation, this stepping back, the danger of which has been called to our attention by Gramsci, characterized the entire official Marxism of the Stalin Era, and it "culminated" in Stalin's statements, according to which social laws, just as in the case of natural laws, "are the reflections of the objective reality in people's heads". This view is indeed the fetishistic consciousness created by alienation, by reified human relations. It reflects that state of affairs when "man's activity becomes a power alien and opposed to him, being subjected to it instead of being its ruler".

It by no means follows from Marx's view, that all of reality must be considered as man's own activity. However, if we say that deanthropomorphic natural science were also borne by such a fetishistic consciousness, we implicitly consider nature as human activity. By considering positivism to be the acceptance of such an objective view



of nature, we ourselves give ground to a positivistic account of natural science. More precisely, we thereby accept this interpretation, setting philosophy as the only possible interpretation of reality outside of this positivistic view of nature. The view which considers natural science not as knowledge of actual nature but only as a fixation of merely subjective experiences states exactly the same thing about the content of the theories of natural science as modern positivism.

It is not possible that the reality which is the subject matter of science is different from that of philosophy's? Also, that the subject matter of science, i.e. the reality described by it, is in fact a more object not only for cognition but also for human objectifying activity?-- while the subject matter of philosophy, the reality described by philosophy, that is, social life, praxis, is such an object which is at the same time the subject as well? In our opinion, this is the case. Consequently, the "scientific" and the "philosophical" modes of inquiry are not two different methods of approach to one and the same reality (in which it should only be asked whether the two are complementary to each other, or whether one of them should be eliminated in order to reach the right way of approaching reality) but both are the only possible ways of approaching their own subject matter.

Those who say that there is no object without a subject do not accept this solution, however. According to them, nature for man is given only in praxis, and thus it cannot be separated from praxis. Undoubtedly, they say, there is something resisting man's material activity, there is something confronting man; that can be called nature, if we care to call it that, but the concrete structure of this something, those concrete forms in which it appears, its "rationality", the causal relations and regularities valid in it, and thus everything that is seen by man as an object, can by no means be an objective characteristic of this something, i.e. a characteristic independent of human praxis, but it is, on the contrary, created by praxis. Arguments supporting this view cannot really be handled in a cavalier manner. Adherents of this view argue, first of all, that positing a "rationality" of nature, i.e. the supposition that some kind of regularities are at work in nature,





necessarily introjects a transcendent element into nature. Where does this rationality come from, if we do not posit some kind of reason which constructed it, a supernatural reason or a spirit? Order is an offspring of praxis, and the separation of "order" from praxis is just as much an alienated product as is the separation of regularities in society from human activity. Even if one admit the objective existence of a structure in nature, one existing prior to man, they ask, where is that nature today? Humanized nature cannot be identified with nature "in itself". They also refer to Marx: "But nature too, taken abstractly, for itself, and rigidly separated from man, is nothing for man."<sup>6</sup> What is more, in defense of their view, they could even refer to the Marx of the "Theses on Feuerbach", to that Marx who drafts in a definite form his praxis-oriented dialectical philosophy: "The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking which is isolated from practice is a purely scholastic question."<sup>7</sup> The same can be said about questions referring to an objective nature isolated from praxis. Marx's view on the relation of truth and praxis can only be interpreted correctly if we see that truth itself comes about only in praxis. Theory as a picture reflecting reality does not exist; it is a part of praxis, and thus does not stand above it.

First of all, we have to admit that for man nature in its "Being-for-itself" is really nothing. Nature is only given to us in praxis, in activity. Accordingly, the meaning of nature changes historically, not only in the sense that human activity transforms the originally given environment, i.e. it objectively changes "nature", but also in the sense--and this is more important--that man's picture of nature is constantly formed and transformed by man's metabolism with nature. Differences of interpretation are often a consequence of the fact that, by and within praxis, nature is penetrated more and more. The elementary particles of matter have by no means always belonged to what nature means to man. More and more, phenomena of a novel qualitative nature are discovered in nature, and, in most cases, that is why man is compelled to reinterpret those already at hand.

Since natural science always forms its view of nature by means of



the practice of a given age, then not even the most exact natural science can give man the view of nature; the natural sciences of an age cannot separate themselves--at least not radically--from the productive activities of their age, from their patterns of concrete objectifying activity. This does not force us to say that the view of nature of the sciences is a projection of an alienated social praxis. The concrete content and depth of our view of nature are bound to praxis, and nothing can be known of nature not connected with praxis, with the social mode of existence. This, and only this, is stated by Marx. But the fact that science's deanthropomorphic view of nature assigns a definite structure to nature reflects something which is the same as our description of it (without added human praxis), and is proved by praxis itself. It is explained by the fact that, to overcome the resistance of that particular "something", we need definite presuppositions, for the realization of our human purposes concerning nature is a function of our knowledge of nature. Nevertheless, we should not concentrate on partial elements. The realization of a practical task is not proof, in itself, of the truth of the concepts which make the solution possible. This can only be said by a pragmatist, who identifies truth with its possible use.

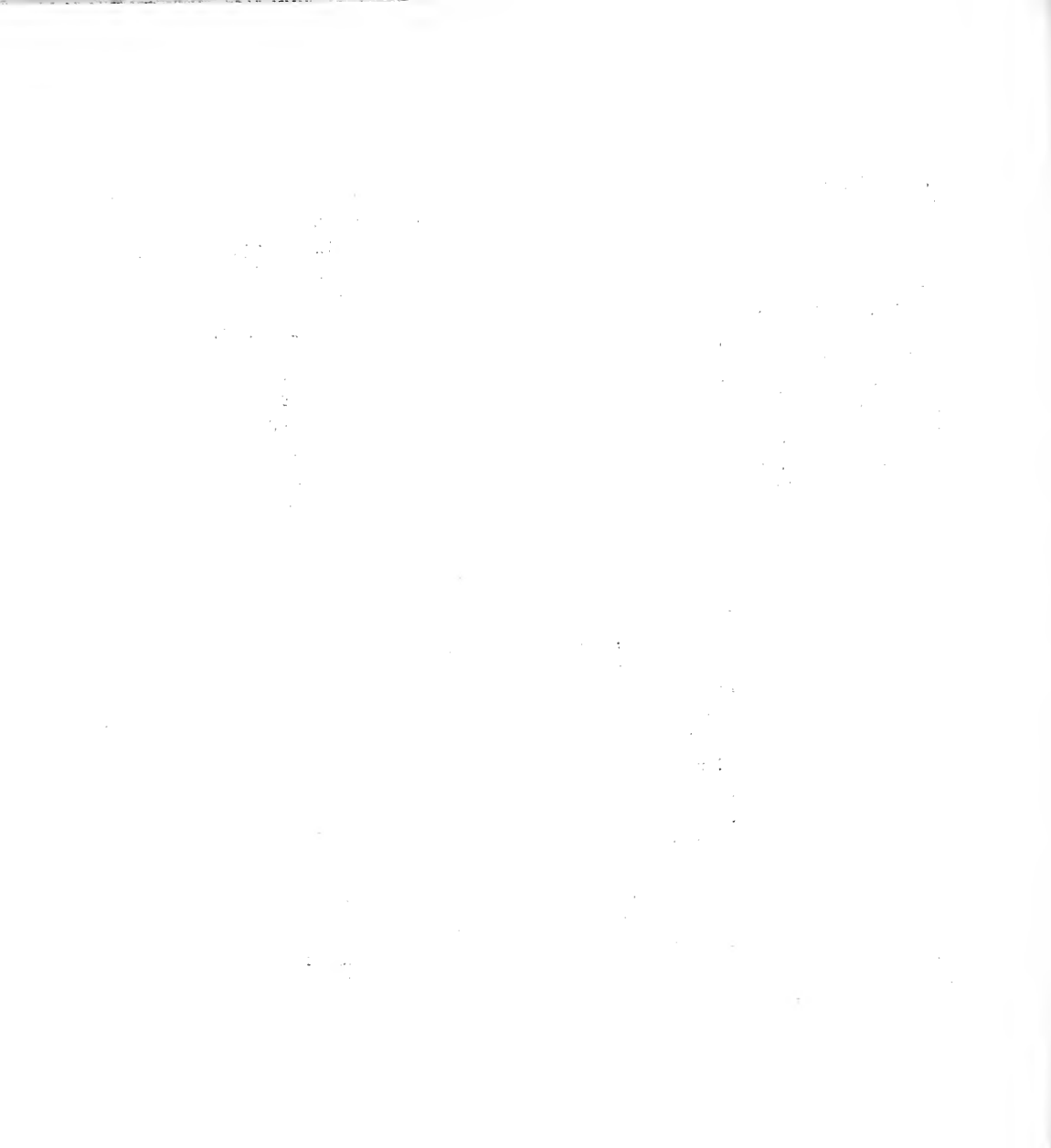
The difference between the concepts of praxis (as criteria of truth) in Marxism and pragmatism does not lie in the fact that in pragmatic theory truth is identified with usefulness, while for Marxism praxis is the criterion of truth. Using such phrases (and very often Marxists could not argue in any other way) the difference is only verbal. A Marxist would often add to the pragmatic account by saying that this truth is also objective. The difference is to be looked for somewhere else, in the interpretation of praxis itself. For the pragmatist praxis consists only in individual acts, but according to Marxism praxis is social life itself. The Marxian criterion of truth based on praxis is not to be identified with utility or success in definite, concrete actions. Several examples could be cited to show that false, or only relatively true, concepts make correct, purposeful action possible. The truth of man's view of nature as an historical process is verified by praxis in its entirety, by making possible man's domination over nature,



i.e. "forcing back nature's barriers" to a greater and greater extent. On the basis of the entirety of the unfolding of our view of nature, the truth of the individual aspects of knowledge is always relative, in the sense that the veracity of these aspects can be verified (in most cases) only by fitting them coherently into the whole of our view of nature. Furthermore, the "whole" is true only as a process. It can always have parts (often very important ones) which are false, whose falsity cannot be recognized at that particular stage.

In such an interpretation of the criterion of truth, the following argument against discovering objective truth about nature also turns out to be invalid. If the forcing back of natural barriers justifies the objective, deanthropomorphic view of nature, then, by analogy with this, one can say that praxis in its entirety is evidence of an "objective", i.e. fetishistic, alienated view of society. However, the difference between the two analogues, nature and society, is fundamental; for, while in relation to nature man does achieve his aims on the basis of an objective view of nature, the "objective" view of society has not led to the realization of such aims, even if some "objective" social theories have served as a ground for some effective social movements. Nevertheless, the result has never coincided with the purpose.

Thus the acceptance of IInd Thesis on Feuerbach, analyzing the relationship of truth and practice, by no means contradicts the setting up of nature as an object and the positing of an objectivity independent of man. Viewing nature purely speculatively, i.e. raising questions in such a way that any choice between speculations cannot function to transform nature, is really barren scholasticism; its truth is not only undecidable but any question concerning its truth is usually meaningless as well. The view of nature of the natural sciences is by no means on this level. The natural sciences have gradually become part of such moments of human praxis that are aimed at the transformation of nature; to that extent, they have become justified theoretically. Earlier descriptions of nature had raised such questions in a scholastic way. This was not just false natural science but a philosophy of nature, and as a philosophy of nature it was not a view of nature but was



directly a function of a very limited praxis. If we accept the view of nature of the natural sciences as a reflection of objective nature (historically determined by praxis), then we also must accept the rationality of nature, that there is an "order" in nature. It is, moreover, difficult to avoid positing a transcendent principle creating this order. But the world-view of the natural sciences does not set up the rational order of the changes taking place in nature. There is a reverse relation between nature and rationality: it is human rationality that conforms to the structure of nature. There is nothing mystical in this, and it does not involve any kind of transcendence. Man's activity is the basis of his rationality. Even the most primitive teleological setting--and without some such setting there can be no talk about labor--is opposed by "something", by nature. The human telos can become objectified only if it takes into account the characteristics of that "something". The rational appearance of the characteristic traits of the "something" can be explained by the fact that human reason itself has been formed in a process lasting several thousand years, during which man "reached into nature's arrangement", an arrangement which is neither rational nor irrational, but is just as it is.

At the outset we pointed out that Marxism surpassed the Hegelian mythologized form of the identity of subject and object by conceiving human activity as objectifying. The object of this activity becomes, in the course of history, a part of the praxis that results in humanized nature. But at the same time, it never ceases to be nature, insofar as it "obeys" those laws which a non-humanized nature also obeys. In the Hegelian sense, humanized nature retains its original nature, while simultaneously losing it. Thus man cannot make himself independent of nature, even in the realm of freedom. Freedom and universality belong to Marx's concept of the human essence. Even in the most emancipated society, one free from alienation, this universality does not imply that man's possibilities have no limits. Though man can realize his goals, not only is the positing of these goals itself determined, but an adequate means must be found, in addition, for their realization. The adequacy of their means is determined by natural objectivities.





Man's freedom does not imply being thrown into nothingness. Men are placed in very definite, natural conditions, so man's freedom is achieved within his struggle against these conditions.

Thus science and philosophy do not differ in their way of approach; their difference has an objective foundation, i.e. it is rooted in reality. That reality which is constituted by pure objects must be handled as pure objects, i.e. "scientifically". The other reality, however, which can only be seen as the unity of subject and object, i.e. as praxis, is adequately grasped only by philosophy. Any social science which posits society or even some of its elements as pure objects, viz. assigning objective regularities independent of human activity, apprehends society basically in a false, fetishized, alienated way, approaching it merely phenomenally.

Such a social science endeavoring to explore the unchanging "natural laws" of society will remain captured by the fetishistic, alienated social conditions; it is suitable for "interpretation" only, not for "transformation". This does not mean that the interpretation of society must be exchanged for a transformation of it. Change is possible only when we know how and what to change. The Marxian recognition of the dialectical unity of object and subject alone does not change society, does not create the realm of freedom. In a world where the dialectical unity of subject and object has been upset, where human products face man as powers independent of him, and where, consequently, the subject becomes an object, the situation must be surveyed thoroughly. This survey is the task of the so-called "specialized" branches of the social sciences, which describe the actual operations of social laws functioning as natural laws. But these specialized branches do not and cannot serve anything else but the continuation of alienated social conditions, if they are not subjected to a philosophical outlook.

If sociology sets before itself the task of revealing the actual functioning of a given social formation, it fulfills a very useful role. Such a role is useful so long as it does not consider social regularities as something man should "apply" or "exploit"; i.e. if we do not think of these regularities in the same way we conceive of natural laws. Sociology is fruitful when we clearly see and show that such laws are the products



of human activity, that with revolutionary activity man can do away with these laws. Furthermore, if by law, by "objective regularity", connections typical of those between natural phenomena are intended, then in the realm of freedom man does away with social laws in general. In a free society the movement of the society is subjected to the conscious aims of men and not to "objective" regularities. If by the "scientific" approach we mean considering the laws of the field investigated as something given independently of man, to which man must--willy-nilly--accommodate himself, then social science cannot be spoken of, or social science is turned into fetishistic consciousness. The philosophical view, based on the unity of subject-object, because it posits not the individual consciousness but the entirety of human activities as inseparable from its object, does not prevent social reality from being treated as objective in the ontological sense, i.e. from investigating causal connections, correlations in society, from exploring specific regularities in the society. For man to realize his aims (which grow out of social life), since "man" is not an individual realizing his will in some vacuum but is socialized mankind (even in the realm of freedom), he must clearly see the nature of the actual relationships among men. We also realize that social processes, praxis, are never isolated from their metabolism with nature, from labor; praxis is always built upon it. Such are the "objective" regularities of social life which can never be eliminated.

Those who are anxious about Marxism's adoption of positivist interpretations of social laws are justified in perceiving a danger. The practical voluntarism of the Stalinist period was really connected with a positivist, fetishized conception of law, and we cannot be said to have done away with this standpoint. Its theoretical antidote, however, is not a verbal declaration of the dialectical identity of subject and object outside their actual historical conditions. On the contrary, it is a consistent realization of this philosophical viewpoint in the social sciences, showing that the regularities of society are brought about historically, by human activity, and can be



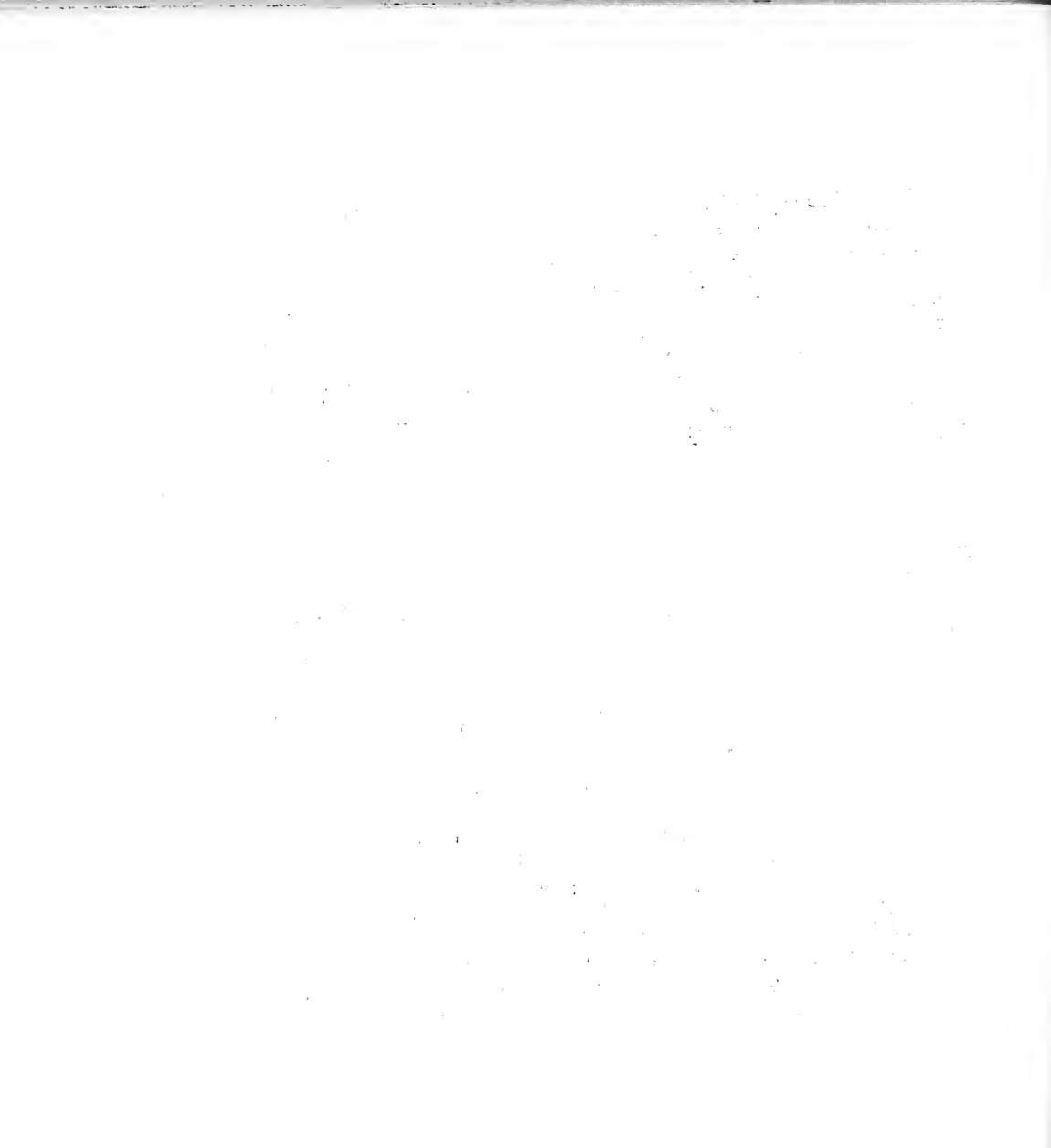
done way with by revolutionary praxis. Rejecting the "scientific" viewpoint or isolating it from philosophy is the standpoint of desperation; it is an expression of that despair which does not want to accept the Marxian approach to society. The rejection of an objective picture of nature is a consequence of the same fear and despair. The acceptance of social sciences subordinated to a philosophical standpoint does not entail shifting the scientific picture of nature over to society. This is altogether mistaken. The extrapolation of the view of nature to society cannot be permitted, even if in terms of a certain historical period we see that such a society also has "objective" laws. The boundaries between the different spheres of existence or forms of motion cannot be blurred; nature cannot be described on the pattern of society, nor can society be described on the pattern of nature. This we say without taking into account the fact that nature itself is divided into various spheres. The kind of causation which dominates the physical sphere has no bearing upon society, nor upon the biosphere. If, for example, the complex problems of the nature of physical causality (playing such a great role in the philosophy of nature in our age) is a philosophical question at all (and not that of natural science), then it comes from the fact that it often contains problems of social praxis.

When Planck takes sides with classical determinism in quantum mechanics, he certainly looks for the methodological determinants of the further development of physics. But since his classical conception of causality is just as compatible with experimentally controllable facts, and leads to the same practical consequences as the conception of Bohr or Heisenberg (who stand up for a static, non-determinism in quantum mechanics, and extend it generally throughout physics), the difference of the two conceptions comes from their (often unconscious) social conceptions. Planck's notion of the freedom of the will is only the Kantian freedom of the moral attitude remaining in the inner human sphere, which also is founded on the absolute determinism of the actions of men. For Planck man is totally unfree. Man's freedom serves



merely to "give a solid view for our miserable conditions, securing long-lasting coherency in our own ego for our everyday life, giving us inner peace". With Bohr we can show how far the raising of complementarity to a philosophical principle is connected with a disorientation of social values. Shall we say, then, that a philosophy of nature does not exist? No, it doesn't. More exactly, the philosophy of Marxism, by placing the category of praxis at the center, made it clear that every question in the philosophy of nature was a derivative of social questions, and thus it separated natural science once and for all from philosophy. It is in the world-view of Marxism that the natural sciences attain their complete objectivity, and it is here that the only objective, deanthropomorphic concept of nature can clearly be justified.

There are undoubtedly questions concerning nature to which the natural sciences of a given period cannot give an unambiguous answer, questions also in which accepted theories have not been experimentally verified. A question which cannot be verified by "exact" methods need not be a philosophical one. Philosophy is not to be distinguished from natural science by its speculative nature. These questions are either put wrongly--this element is exaggerated by neopositivism with its verifiability criterion--or they can be given an exact answer only when the experimental basis is altered. But they are not therefore philosophical questions. This does not mean, however, that such questions should be rejected in the spirit of neopositivism; it does not mean that philosophy should refuse to deal with questions such as these. For, even if nature is not part of praxis, natural science as a specific form of human activity is. Even if the questions mentioned are to be gradually absorbed by the natural sciences, philosophy should still keep vigilance, in order to make sure that natural science should not confine itself to manipulative functions; and should not give up gaining cognition of nature for ideological reasons. Here however, philosophy can take the initiative as a critic only, since it cannot undertake the task of deciding such questions. With respect to nature, the reason for this is that a specifically philosophical approach, i.e. putting





the question based on the unity of subject and object, leads to transcendence, to a projection of some supernatural, anthropomorphic elements beyond nature. It is the "scientific" approach which brings about transcendence; it posits the motif determining history outside of society and man. In society the factor outside man (i.e. nature) does not determine any concrete direction of motion, only the single but fundamental law of the human world: man, if he wants to survive, must keep on maintaining his metabolism with nature. It follows from what has been said, that philosophy is not the science of the most general laws of the world. Philosophy can be regarded as the science of the most general regularities of reality only if our image of society is created on the pattern of nature, i.e. only if we fall back on the fetishist conception of society of "philosophical materialism"; or if we do away with objectivity, and seemingly spread the dialectical unity of subject and object to all of reality (but, in fact, eliminate this unity by rendering the object a derivative of the subject, denying the objectivity of nature, and thus the objectifying nature of human activity).

Historical materialism is not an "application" of the general laws of reality to society; it is not deduced from dialectical materialism. Dialectical and historical materialism form an organic unity; it is a social philosophy, and at the same time the only possibility of laying the foundations of a non-fetishistic social science, one in complete harmony with the deanthropomorphic, objective conception of nature of the natural sciences. The unity of the world is not upset. Social life, praxis, is built upon natural objectivity, from which it emerged when teleological projects commenced.

INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY



NOTES

1. "Theses on Feuerbach". In Marx & Engels, Selected Works (New York: International, 1968), p. 30.
2. 1st thesis, ibid., p. 28.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. (Marx referred here with this ironic phrase to Feuerbach's condescension towards practice and Feuerbach's elevation of the theoretical attitude, to Feuerbach's lack of insight into revolutionary praxis, i.e. the dialectical type, viz. "practical-critical" activity--Editor.)
6. Karl Marx, "Critique of Hegel's Dialectic and General Philosophy", Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts. In Karl Marx: Early Writings, trans. T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 217.
7. Thesis II, op. cit., p. 28.



Auguste Cornu,

"The Formation of Historical Materialism"\*

The founding of historical materialism was intimately related to Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels' socio-political development. This formation took place on the basis of their theoretical needs which had stemmed from their struggle for the emancipation of the working class. During their transition towards communism, Marx and Engels saw the emerging problem of exhibiting the historic role of both the proletariat and communism by means of a critique of the capitalist system.

In his articles in the Deutsch-Französischen Jahrbücher ("On the Jewish Question" and in his "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction"\*\*) Marx proved, with the aid of an analysis of the effects of the system of private ownership, the historical role of the revolutionary proletariat in the transformation of social relationships. Later in his Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,\*\*\* he composed a fundamental critique of the capitalist system, using Feuerbach's theory of alienation. Alienation was a socio-

\* Translated by David H. DeGroot (with Gunther Hubmann). Originally appeared as "Die Herausbildung des historischen Materialismus" (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1967). Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin: Vorträge und Schriften, Heft 104. Reprinted by permission of Professor Cornu. Essay abridged for this volume.

\*\* Available in Karl Marx: Early Writings, T. B. Bottomore, ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963)--Editor.

\*\*\*For a fine edition see Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, Martin Mulligan trans. (New York: International, 1964)--Editor.



economic phenomenon manifesting itself in the form of alienated labor. From this capitalist context there ensued both dehumanization, particularly of the proletariat, and the necessity of superseding this system by communism. His analysis of alienated labor revealed the decisive role of productive labor as Praxis in the formation of the life of men and in the evolution of history. Beginning from Praxis, the basic features of which he defined in his critique of Hegelian idealism, Marx reached his initial conception of historical materialism, showing how men, in contrast to animals, transform nature in order to adapt it to satisfy their needs, and how, reciprocally, men evolve out of this transformation. This simultaneous transformation of nature and man, he believed, characterized the history of man and constituted history's essential content.

In this first general formation of historical materialism, some of the quasi-metaphysical views of Feuerbach remained; such concepts as "true" work and "true" man, which were placed in opposition to "alienated" labor and "alienated" man, still had a role. The same is true of the utopian division of history into a "pre-human" period (as a consequence of the system of private ownership and of alienated labor) and into a "human" period (after the abolition of this system).

Similar views, reached in a wholly different way, were discovered by Engels and set forth in the Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher in his article describing conditions in England. In these essays, which were the outcome of his various experiences in England, he showed respectively, that communism must invariably be the result of economic evolution and particularly of the industrial revolution, historic developments which would ruin the middle class through competition and economic crises, then increase the proletariat and sharpen the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and thus lead to the communist revolution.

Due to the similarity of their basic views, Marx and Engels decided at their meeting in Paris to settle accounts with the young Hegelian, speculative philosophy. This was the occasion for the formulation of their Holy Family,\* in which they (in particular Marx) not only completely

\* Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, The Holy Family, trans. R. Dixon (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1956)---Editor.





broke with their earlier idealistic views; but also, by means of an analysis of political and social questions from the materialist standpoint, they almost wholly rid themselves of Feuerbach's views.

In their next phase of ideological development, set forth in Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach,"\* Engels' The Condition of the Working Class in England,\*\* and in their German Ideology\*\*\*; they fully surmounted "true" socialist metaphysics, dogma, and utopia.

The decisive factor pertaining to the conditions of England at that time was the industrial revolution. The quickly developing factory industry had ruined and eliminated, in ever increasing measure, artisans and small workshops, had made the big bourgeoisie the ruling class, and had created a constantly growing proletariat. The expansion of machine production, which brought about a continuous decline in wages with a simultaneous lengthening of the working day, had depressed the condition of the working class in rapid pace; but at the same time it had sharpened their class struggle against the ruling classes of bourgeoisie and landed proprietors, their exploiters. Thus, the principal class struggle no longer took place, as it had up to that time, between the big bourgeoisie (representing industrial and commercial interests) and the aristocracy, which because of its monopoly of the soil and its ownership of the mines, retained a strong position of power; but the struggle occurred between the big bourgeoisie and landed proprietors, as the ruling classes, and, on the other side, the town and country proletariats, who were exploited to the last drop of their blood. The proletariat, organizing itself in trade unions and in the Chartist Movement, had

\* Contained in Friedrich Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy (New York: International, 1941). pp. 82-84--Editor.

\*\* Friedrich Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, trans. W. O. Henderson & W. H. Chaloner (New York: Macmillan, 1958).

\*\*\*See the complete edition of Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, The German Ideology, trans. S. Ryazanskaya (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), 736 pp.



gained the rights of association and the strike (with additional political rights) in harsh and vicious struggles.

In contrast to England, where the industrial revolution was quite advanced, this same revolution was still in progress in France; and it was in its early stages in Germany.

France was still predominantly an agrarian country. During the revolution of 1789, the dispossessed aristocracy did not have the economic, social, and political bases of power it had in England. Since production still had mainly merchant and artisan features, craftsmen and petty bourgeoisie were still quite strong. Due to the rising competition with factory production, their position had already been shaken, and they did not play a significant political role in the developing census-voting-rights process. As in England, the French big bourgeoisie, after its revolution of 1830 when it had actually reached power, had replaced the aristocracy as a ruling class. The suppression of the middle class and its exclusion from political power through the census-voting-rights act led to a struggle between the agrarian conservatives, who were allied with the big bourgeoisie, and, on the other side, the middle class, which more or less attempted to sustain itself through the working class.

The principal conflict, however, took place as a class struggle between the bourgeoisie and laboring classes, nevertheless taking on another form from that of England. In France the majority of the working class was still comprised of journeymen, who in increasing measure were proletarianized, and therefore closely united in their struggle with the workers connected with artisan production. Since the French working class, unlike English workers, possessed neither the right to association, nor the right to strike, nor voting rights; they were therefore unable to organize legally, resorting to illegal strikes and demonstrations (which were jointly organized in secret societies with revolutionary members of the middle class).

Germany was first and foremost an agrarian country. In the states east of the Elbe and in the Prussian provinces, dominated by the Junkers semi-feudal conditions still prevailed. In contradistinction to Prussia, which was ruled by absolutism, the middle and south German states had



more or less liberal constitutions; it was in the latter, particularly in the state of Baden, that a middle class gaining strength struggled under the influence of French ideas for liberal democratic reforms. The industrial revolution did not really begin until after the founding of the Customs-Union, which had been the prerequisite for such a development. Large-scale industry along the lines of factory production developed in Silesia, Saxony, but above all in the Rhineland. Also arising there was a big bourgeoisie, which took (with the increase of its economic and social power) a firm position against feudalism and absolutism, particularly in the Rhineland, where it was most vigorous. This big bourgeoisie demanded with increasing energy a liberal constitution for the realization of its class interests. They thus inclined, as a result of the struggle they had at the same time been making against the proletariat, to compromise with the Prussian monarchy, since this was an essential prop for the exploitation and oppression of the proletariat. A section of the middle class broke off, especially an increasing number of progressive intellectuals, from the big bourgeoisie. This middle class section, in distinction to the big bourgeoisie, fought not towards liberal but towards democratic reforms. These democrats believed that the democratization of the State would satisfactorily solve all political and social problems, that the State was capable of eliminating poverty. Accordingly, they principally placed themselves on the side of the working classes. The proletarian movement first developed in the Silesian revolt. From this time on the movement of revolutionary artisans evolved in growing alliance with the proletarians and, of course, in common association, forming the foundations of the spread of communism.

In their own way, the artisans played a meaningful role in the working class movement, spreading communism and utopianism. In England, there the artisans played an insignificant role in the working class movement, this utopianism could hardly develop; thus artisan communism (with a characteristic utopian character) gained ascendancy in France and Germany.

The revolt of the Silesian weavers had a crucial influence on the



development of the social movement in Germany, contributing not only to the spread of revolutionary action in the German proletariat, but also a characteristic form of utopian socialism in Germany, "true" socialism, began to be abandoned; the German proletariat now stressed poverty as the question of the day. Most intellectuals inclining towards socialism were convinced that poverty could be eliminated only through a profound transformation of social relationships. Since most of them were Feuerbachians, they fused their humanistic theories with communistic ones. The gravest consequences of the capitalist system and of competition were, they thought, the isolation and the egoism, which as the actual religion of the period had resulted in the alienation of human beings. Men could re-obtain their potentialities to lead an adequate, species-type life and become "true" men primarily through the abolition of private property, competition, and the hegemony of money.

By this shifting of the social question to a philosophico-ethical level, "true" socialism arrived at a sentimental utopia. But exactly this type of "true" socialist, which treated the actual question of poverty in its press, brought the social question to all of Germany.

Marx and Engels stood nearly isolated. Gradually there revolutionary communists appeared, such as, for example, Wilhelm Wolff, Georg Weerth, Joseph Weydemeyer, Edgar von Westphalen, and Karl D'Ester, allying themselves with them, and adding their own views.

After constructing historical materialism in their Holy Family, Marx and Engels separated--Marx to Brussels, working out his "Theses on Feuerbach", Engels to Barmen, with his The Condition of the Working Class in England.

In Barmen, Engels set an active communist agitation in motion. He attempted to turn chiefly to the proletariat in Barmen and Elberfeld, but found no hearing among the exploited and depressed proletariat. After this initial attempt he recognized with Hess, that the bourgeoisie could be made use of, as it had been stimulated by the weavers' revolt and the growing problem of poverty. Thus they set in motion communist propaganda, in addition to debates about social problems, hoping to win over progressive citizens to communism.





Roused by the rapid propagation of communist ideas and their success in these meetings, they organized meetings in Elberfeld. In his speeches Engels maintained that communism was not an abstract theory, not a utopia, but rather the necessary outcome of the development of the capitalist system, which through competition and crises resulted in: the ruin of the middle class, the intensification of the class struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat, and hence inevitably to communism. He founded this prognosis on an analysis of the consequences of free trade and protectionism, both contributing in his opinion to a communist transformation of social relationships in Germany. Because these meetings looked squarely at the ominous results of existing arrangements, the authorities moved towards their suppression.

Another possibility for propagating communism opened up for Engels and Hess through the founding of the socialist magazines Der Gesellschaftsspiegel and the Rheinischen Jahrbücher zur gesellschaftlichen Reform. Founded by Engels as the first socialist organ in Germany, the Gesellschaftsspiegel hopefully was to rectify completely the modes of living not only of German, but also of English, French, and Belgian workers.

Also, Engels outlined in his correspondence with Hess and Marx a critique of Stirner's work, The Ego and Its Own. Since his materialist world view was not yet as firmly established as Marx's, Engels came up with the idea that Stirner's theory, with the appropriate interpretation, could be used by communism. Nevertheless, Marx rejected this attempt, deciding that in his firm conviction one could not arrive at an accurate view of man and his history, if like Stirner one separated the individual from his social relationships.

Engels furnished a crucial contribution to the formation of historical materialism and scientific socialism thereafter with his work, The Condition of the Working Class in England. This work is the first from the standpoint of historical materialism, a closing exposition of an historical epoch. This study formed in him a healthy counterbalance against the influx of German matters, especially against "true" socialism, which for a while he nearly joined upon his return from



England. Marx was also enabled by this work to feel an unconditional partisanship for the proletariat, and coupled with his profound analysis of economic and social relations he was to gain an evolving revolutionary standpoint.

Despite the economic, social, and ideological measures which were at its command, the bourgeoisie was not able to prevent the struggle of the proletariat from steadily sharpening. Instead of isolated, fierce rebellions, now it was able to organize because of trade unions and Chartism, leading resolute trade unionist and political struggles. In the growing consciousness of his class interests, the proletarian removed himself further and further from utopianism and reformism, since he was growing in maturity and gaining the clear knowledge that the only way to his liberation was through communist revolution. In the same measure as the bourgeoisie, which had previously been a progressive class in its battle against feudalism and absolutism, became conservative, the proletariat came as the representative of the future, as the new progressive class. Engels rid himself of the Feuerbachian metaphysic and humanism, by moving away from "true" socialism; he produced, completely independently of Marx, an essential contribution towards the formation of historical materialism. From his analysis of English conditions he brought forth--certainly not as systematically summarized, nor as clearly formulated as in Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach"--the fundamental principles of historical materialism: An accurate knowledge of history can only be obtained by way of an exact and thorough analysis of real relationships, found, indeed, beneath the spoilage of the idealistic and utopian ways of thinking. The historical process had essentially depended upon the development of the forces of production and upon the transformation of social relations, which produce the class struggle. The forces of production--in the case of modern England fundamentally transformed in the industrial revolution--had determined the division of labor and property relations, i.e. social and political relationships, as well as men's habits and notions.

The views of men, their ideology, like their social relations have a class character, since they depend on the material conditions of man's



life and reflect them. Beliefs, therefore, were not the result of anything beyond class-derived ideas, since philosophy, religion, morals, and law served as a distinct method of justification for the interests of antagonistic classes; and the battle of ideas and principles in reality was but the reflection of the conflict over the realization of material interests. Hence there follows the obsolete character of the idealistic view of history, as far as the history of ideas is actually determined, and the absence of relevance of any theory detached from practice.

These general principles of historical materialism that formed the foundations of Engels' analysis of the conditions of the working class in England, in the meantime, were not worked out systematically and clearly formulated by Engels, but more or less factually used and more or less presupposed. In addition, moreover, his analysis contained idealistic remnants, which however, did not come into serious tension with his generally materialistic account. Also Engels had not arrived at the high level of generalization that Marx had reached; in addition, he left this function of acquiring theoretical knowledge to Marx, Engels emphasizing his own incisive research into the connections between social questions and economic relationships, and herein lay his advantage over Marx.

In his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, Marx had won his insight into the meaning and role of praxis (about the time Engels finished his work), crystallizing it in his "Theses on Feuerbach", in which, fully overcoming the Feuerbachian metaphysic, he set down the essentials of his new materialist Weltanschauung. In his "Theses on Feuerbach" Marx did not bring forth, as in his Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts and to some extent later in The Holy Family, "alienated" and "true" man, but praxis as man's productive activity. From this standpoint of praxis he criticized Feuerbach's philosophy, setting down the principles of dialectical and historical materialism, almost in antithesis to Feuerbach.

Since Feuerbach had neglected practice, he did not consider man in his relationship to society, but rather principally in his affective



relations to other men and to nature, society being conceived by him as the totality of these naturalistic, affective individuals as species-types. This is how his misplaced approach stood on social questions, particularly concerning the religious life (which was for him essentially composed of psychic processes). Nothing else came out of the problem of the relationships of Thought and Being. Only if one proceeds from praxis, Marx showed, can one gain a correct conception of the individual in his active relationship to nature and society, conceiving society as the totality of economic and social relationships.

In Brussels in April, 1845, Marx explained the general principles of his materialistic philosophy to Engels. It impressed Engels profoundly, since the connections between economic, social, political, and ideological development stood out clearly and on a high plane of abstraction, which Engels' work lacked.

While in England, Engels had strengthened his materialist outlook through studies in political economy. He made intimate contact with the leaders of the "League of the Just" and of Chartism; thus he was taking part in these movements on an international scale, immediately influencing the leaders of various countries in the workers' movement.

The revolutionary role of the proletariat was even better understood now, strengthening also the conviction that the proletariat would be successful in the end, and that it would support historical materialism. Such support would entail a relentless elimination of idealism, dogmatism, and utopianism. This was the presupposition of their joint work, The German Ideology. In this work a general exposition of the fundamental principles of historical materialism was made, doing battle with the Young Hegelian speculative philosophy, the latest form of idealism, settling accounts with Bruno Bauer and particularly with Stirner. Moreover, they began to analyze utopian socialism, while submitting "true" socialism to a critique.

Their exposition went in the direction of an analysis of the principal periods of history, which was almost the antithesis of the idealistic theory of history constructed by bourgeois historians and philosophers. Bourgeois historians, who had not taken into account the





fundamentals of history, viz. the production of material life and the economic and social relationships given birth by them, in addition to neglecting these, had seen the driving forces of history in religious and political struggles. This idealist view of history had further stimulated the speculative philosopher to reduce the evolution of history to that of Spirit.

In opposition to these bourgeois historians and philosophers, Marx and Engels held out the axiom that the essential and decisive factor in the shaping of history was man's own production of his material life. As Engels had first set forth in his work on the conditions of the English working class, Marx and Engels traced back the social, political, and ideological to their respective economic relationships.

They distinguished three principal epochs in the development of history. In the first man lived a beast, a product of nature, since he was yet not capable of transforming himself through his productive activity. In the second men were able to transform nature in increasing measure already, developing themselves on the basis of the evolution of their reason and techniques. The third epoch divided itself into four principal periods according to the modes of production, the division of labor, and hence their respective property relations.

The first is that of collective tribal ownership, which conformed to its primitive way of life and to its modes of production. It developed the first division of labor, and indeed the beginnings of the separation of city and country, and it gave birth to slavery.

The second period is that of ancient community and state ownership. The separation of city and country advanced, and slavery became an integral part and distinct form of productive labor. In their cities there was produced a wider division of labor, brought about by the differentiation between industry and commerce and between manual work and mental labor. This also occasioned for the first time a tremendous, overall class conflict, viz. that between masters and slaves.

The third period is that of feudal or estate property. In this



period the principal means of production centers on the soil, the aristocracy as landed proprietors performing the leading social and political role. As the ancient rulers exploited the slaves, so did the nobility the serfs, and this also resulted in similar class struggles. Corresponding to the relations in rural feudal society, a strict hierarchical structure was also exhibited in the cities. In the guilds there was apparent a hierarchical character in the separation between masters, journeymen, and apprentices. Commerce gradually moved towards the limits of the cities, becoming the principal thrust of economic and social progress. With the growth of commerce and industry the bourgeoisie developed as an ascending class; it fought against the aristocrats and guilds, its oppressors, and also against journeymen and the city plebian strata. Due to limited industrial production and rudimentary business transactions, Capital still had an indigenous character, soil or workshops being the main components of property. This was the basis for production, and consequently the division of labor was only gradually progressing.

The fourth period is characterized by the passage of production chiefly towards artisan manufacture and then to factory production, and as a result from the feudal to the capitalist system. The formation and development of artisan production were promoted by the rise of commerce and the regular growth of fluid capital. From the discovery of new areas in Asia, Africa, and America and the founding of colonies, commerce developed, especially maritime commerce.

The expansion of sea trade and artisan production accelerated the accumulation of fluid capital and created the necessary conditions for building a money market with banks, paper money, and state credit. Simultaneously a profound social and political transformation was accomplished. In relation to commerce and artisan production, agriculture failed to increase in importance. Moreover, aristocrats and guilds lost economic and social power to the upcoming big bourgeoisie.

Now the demands of industrialization grew in such a way that artisan production was no longer able to satisfy them: here the rapid



progress of technology made possible a new means of production, artisans were gradually replaced by the factory, in which machine production was employed in increasing measure by steam power. The rapid rise of big industry, which now surpassed commerce in importance, brought a speedy improvement and expansion of the means of transportation and communication, hastened the accumulation of fluid capital, and produced a profound transformation of the relationships of men and nations to one another through the increasing division of labor between industry and commerce and through the change in property relations.

As a result, the overall reification of social relations robbed human relations of their personal character, which became commodity relations instead. At the same time, there was a change in the class structure of society.

The power of the big bourgeoisie grew, and it rose to be the ruling class. They subjugated all non-capitalist countries and in their own countries all other classes.

With its class interests accomplished, the big bourgeoisie decided the course of capital and states, deciding also questions of religion, morality, and political economy. By its endeavor to ensure its class rule through economic, social, political, and ideological means, the big bourgeoisie in the meantime struck at the growing resistance of the proletariat, which, almost as its antithesis, was produced with it from large-scale industry. The battle between bourgeoisie and proletariat intensified in proportion to the exploitation of the proletariat and the stage of its awareness of class interest.

The proletarian, for whom labor was not a free, creative activity, but forced upon him, depressing him in proportion to the increase in that which he produced, was forced to sell his labor as a commodity, being ruled by the limitations of commodity production and circulation. From the oppression and exploitation to which he was abandoned, he could only liberate himself by a relentless class struggle against the bourgeoisie. By means of his revolutionary activity the proletariat takes over the leading historical role, which in modern history had previously belonged to the bourgeoisie. The successful accomplishment



of the communist revolution had two conditions: the full development of the capitalist system and a clear class consciousness in the proletariat. The latter required overcoming all illusions and mystifications by which the bourgeoisie had attempted to confound the proletariat, and the elimination of utopianism.

The communist revolution was fundamentally distinct from earlier social revolutions, since those had aimed merely at installing a new ruling class, whereas they did not intend to overcome the exploitation of other oppressed classes. By a radical elimination of the capitalist system, individuals would be able to own the entirety of the forces of production and their products, and hence bring out the totality of their capabilities.

From this exposition of the general outlines of history, the principles of historical materialism were established, and not implicitly and indirectly, as in Engels' earlier work, but explicitly and intentionally. One started with actual men as they are seen in their economic and social activity.

In distinction to animals, who live simply in terms of what nature directly offers them, men are able to transform nature by their productive activity, adapting nature to meet their needs. And thus nature does not remain for man, as for the animal, primeval nature, but rather in increasing measure becomes nature transformed; thus man, unlike the animal, almost always constructs his natural milieu. By transforming nature man develops himself. This simultaneous transformation of nature and man as the result of productive processes constitutes the essential content of history. The development of the forces of production is the decisive element of history.

Since man cannot isolate his needs from others and must constantly satisfy them with others, his productive activity necessarily has a social character. Social relationships are determined by the actual level of the forces of production. A given mode of production corresponds to a definite form of social intercourse, i.e. the social relations which were suited to channel these productive forces.





Consequently, it is clear that history is to be understood only in association with the development of the productive forces, since they determine not only the social but also political and ideological relationships.

In the system of private ownership, the development of the forces of production led to a concentration of ownership in the hands of a minority, to a division of society into haves and have nots, and therefore to class struggles.

The process of history was brought about by the dialectical evolution of the forces of production and social relationships. As a result of the steady development of the forces of production on the basis of increasing needs, the respective social relationships emerged which corresponded to the specific level of the forces of production, which then became obstacles for wider development, thus having to be replaced by others suited to the new status of the productive forces.

The replacement of one social order by another is the outcome of social revolutions based on class conflicts. The development of the forces of production (together with the social modes) determine the ideological spheres. Man's spiritual life is the product of his activity, just as his material life is. Consciousness and thought, consequently, cannot be separated from social relations, of which they are the reflection. Ideology, i.e. the totality of religious, philosophical, moral, social, and political ideas, changes in proportion to the changes in economic and social relationships. This explains why the dominant ideas are always those of the ruling class. Out of the increase in productivity and the division of labor, a rapid development and differentiation of consciousness and thought results. The increasing separation of manual and mental labor led to the founding of a special human category, the thinker. Thereafter there arose a division between social existence and consciousness; this is the origin of ideology.

Through an inversion of the real relationships between Thought and Being, the ideologues came to their view that Being did not give



rise to Consciousness, but rather Consciousness brought Being about, and therefore spiritual activity was basic for them. They thereby brought Spirit to the fore by considering it as something existing independently from material life, as determining men's lives, conceiving it as the motivating force and essential content of history. Consequently, they saw in history nothing but a succession of ideas.

Alienation arose from this spiritualization of real relationships, and alienation similar to that of the religious kind. Absolutized ideas such as the State and Law appeared as alien, ruling powers. As with religious alienation, Marx and Engels found that secular alienation could only be overcome by eliminating the social relationships which had given birth to them.

German speculative philosophy was to be understood as the ideological mirror-image of Germany's backward economic and social conditions. The German bourgeoisie remained quite weak until the creation of the Customs-Union. Here lay the root of its idealist attitude to political questions. Kant's idealism transformed subsequent German speculative philosophy, particularly Hegel's which reduced history to the development of the Spirit. For Hegel history was a dialectical unfolding of concepts, the self-realization of the Absolute Idea.

Bruno Bauer and Max Stirner had brought this idealist view of history to a climax. By the subjectivization of the Hegelian philosophy, they had reduced Hegel's Objective Spirit to consciousness-in-general or to an absolutized Ego, which in contrast to the Absolute Idea, was not both subject and object in close connection with the world, but which developed steadily in opposition to it. By means of this subjectivization of Spirit (and also of the dialectic), history became the outcome of the goals of absolute self-consciousness or of an absolutized Ego. Bruno Bauer and Max Stirner were misled into believing that history could be manipulated by extreme acts of the will; this was due to the fact that they did not possess Hegel's universal knowledge. Thus then, their speculative philosophy became an abstract performance, pure phraseology.



Since they shared Hegel's belief that Spirit determined the course of history, they felt that the transformation of real relations could be obtained by a critique of false ideas. Bruno Bauer reduced man to the concept of Self-Consciousness, referring to man's world (i.e. the totality of economic, social, and political relationships) as "Substance."

The relation of Self-Consciousness to Substance Bauer elevated to the fundamental problem upon which the destiny of man rested. The problem of the critique of absolute critique, of "critical" criticism, was freeing Self-Consciousness from the domination of Substance, particularly Religion and State; and especially, Bauer felt, the "masses" had frustrated the development of Self-Consciousness.

The Young Hegelian liberal movement seemed to him the most significant in history; it was suppressed in 1842. In reality what vanished that year was not really a liberal movement, not a steadily growing bourgeois movement, but the long-winded liberalism of the Young Hegelians.

Stirner's speculations surpassed those of Bruno Bauer's. His brought the process of the subjectivization of Hegelian philosophy to its limit. Instead of considering man in his relations to society and human life in historical context, both of which are determined by the forces of production and social intercourse, Stirner saw men as isolated individuals, leaving them to atrophy as absolutized egos. As Bruno Bauer's Self-Consciousness developed in constant contradiction to Substance, the Stirnerian ego developed by a constant opposition to society, an ego which denied and rejected everything which society had to frustrate it, setting itself in motion and maintaining itself as an absolute, unique ego. The meaning and goal of history was the recovery of this uniqueness by true egoists. Therefore we have the Stirnerian division of history into two principal periods, into pre-history, in which men were not yet self-conscious egoists, and into the unique period of history, in which man set himself in motion as an egoist.

The first period of history broke down into the infancy of mankind in which man had a realistic attitude towards the world and remained



partially in nature, and into the adolescent period, in which men took up an idealistic posture to the world and sought for its essence. In this way they freed themselves from nature's domination, withdrawing into spirit.

As a consequence of this hypostatization of Spirit, concepts became the ultimate substance by which man was oppressed. Thus the world was changed into a world of ghosts, of hobgoblins, in the course of which men became madmen. The rule of fixed ideas consequently developed so that ideas were sanctified, and from this canonization arose a hierarchy which was to crush men. The fundamental origin of this hierarchy (under which Stirner put various kinds of authority, Church, State, Society, Party, etc.) was the respect paid to fixed ideas.

To set real egotists in motion, men must free themselves from the domination of "fixed" ideas and of hierarchies. Liberation would result from the desecration of "fixed" ideas, i.e. by means of purely spiritual acts. Consequently, Stirner fought in the same manner as Bruno Bauer, freeing us from false ideas.

In his critique of political liberalism, Stirner absolutized State and Law, instead of considering them in their connection to economic and social relationships. Furthermore, he treated the question of private property abstractly, neglecting the connection between modes of production and ownership, and therefore failing to understand property as a mode of production. In his polemic against social liberalism, under which he subsumed communism, Stirner also proceeded speculatively. He took the position that it also suppressed the individual, as liberalism had, indeed especially by hindering individuals from becoming private owners. That had been the origin of pauperism. To abolish pauperism, he accordingly put forth a utopian method: Repudiation of money, free labor, etc.

The unique person creates himself, a self constructed in opposition to every association, a self opposing anything not adequate to himself and frustrating to his development. Such self-creation took place, as in Bruno Bauer, through the destruction of false ideas,





i.e. by a transformation of consciousness.

By dissociating himself from all sacred cows, the unique person reached his uniqueness, making the entire world his own. Stirner's unique one realized itself as hypostatized ego, but really only as a caricature of a real man.

With their pseudo-revolutionary phraseology, Bruno Bauer and Max Stirner reflected the backwardness and wretchedness of German conditions. Bruno Bauer's Song of Songs of self-consciousness and Stirner's encomium of the unique one were the glossed over image of the illusions of the German petty bourgeoisie. Stirner's apologia for uniqueness particularly suited the swaggering attitudes of the Berlin Philistines, who blustered more and more loudly against the conditions which had to be endured. In this way, since they could not transform their conditions, Stirner's philosophy actually rested on an arch-conservative foundation. It was the expression of the wishes of the petty bourgeois who desired to retain the capitalist system and to realize his interests within this system.

Marx and Engels settled accounts with speculation and dogmatism conclusively. They rounded off their materialist philosophy by opposing each idealist thesis with a materialist one. With their critique of utopian socialism, Marx and Engels now had a firmly based materialist Weltanschauung, particularly to pit against the specifically German form of "utopian" socialism, viz. "true" socialism, which was increasing its influence over the German working class.

The character of "true" socialism was explained by its distorting circumstances. This initial German liberalism was the idealist, mystified opposite of English and French class struggles. In contradistinction to the English and French socialists and communists, who were defending in practice the interests of the working class, coupling this with a critique of capitalist relationships; the "true" socialists proceeded on the basis of a speculative socialism, seeing it primarily as a theoretical question. This also resulted in the movement having a literary character, in the main, degenerating partly into phrasemongering.



Since "true" socialists transformed socialism into a dizziness of feeling, it became dangerous for the struggle of the working class; for in Germany there was as yet a weak revolutionary proletariat. This made it necessary for Marx and Engels to come to grips with "true" socialism. They began with a critique of its founders: Feuerbach and Hess.

Feuerbach, they believed, could not complete his critique of idealism or correctly round out his materialism, since he had not taken practice into account. Indeed he saw man as a sensuous object, not as sensuous activity. He did not view man as active and productive, continuing to bring out an abstract, generalized outlook on "man", and misdirecting him by considering only the relationships of man with nature. This explained his philosophy's deficiencies. Feuerbach .. thought of nature in its original form, neglecting the fact that the primitive, immediate connections of man with nature had been increasingly replaced by the results of man's productive activity. This accounted for Feuerbach's contemplative view of nature and his passive worship of its glory and omnipotence.

He also saw human relationships from this same contemplative perspective, criticizing them not from a social but from a generalized, anthropological perspective. This led him, furthermore, to invent a reified, undifferentiated individual, the concept "man." Feuerbach had spoken of an "essence" common to all men. Society thereby became a "species," and social relationships turned into a hypostatized species-life. Initially, "true" man arose as the realization of the species-type in the union of I and You. And thus the emotional relationships of love and friendship had an essential role for Feuerbach. This anthropological mode of reflection had a fragmenting result on materialism and history; his materialism turned out to be quite unhistorical, and the view of history idealistic, and thereby also utopian.

In his version of utopianism, humanity's existing miserable condition was juxtaposed against an ideal condition, history being set the goal of realizing it. To resurrect the "true" man, one must over-



come religious illusions; thus Feuerbach advanced a vague form of humanism, calling it communism. Feuerbach's outlook on history showed that he was not in a position to master the social situation. Every discrepancy between being and essence he explained as an unhappy fall in which nothing essentially changed. Therefore, he denied the necessity for the oppressed class struggling. Above all, disharmonies are caused by religion, in which man alienated his species-being into God. The problem was an object of consciousness, to be overcome through enlightenment and intelligence.

Moreover, Feuerbach stimulated Hess' concept of communism. For Hess the solution of practical and theoretical problems required a critique of bourgeois society from the standpoint of Feuerbachian humanism. The English and French had not been able to do this, since they had concentrated on the practical side of social problems, neglecting the theoretical side, since they had not reflected upon the nature of man and his alienation.

Alienation interested Hess in its socio-economic form, rather than its religious variety. This type of alienation was brought about by the system of private property, which made free activity (uniting labor and joy) impossible because profit seeking and competition reigned, transforming men into isolated, egoistical individuals. Within the capitalist system, which ruled and oppressed him, man's activity had been forced upon him as slave labor, turning the product of his labor into commodities, and therefore into money, which had become man's true God. By separating the worker from the product of his labor, society was divided into haves and have nots, and gave rise to widespread exploitation, turning society into a jungle. There was but one way to set man free: replacing the capitalist system by communism. This metamorphosis could not be accomplished at once or violently, but would be advanced gradually and peacefully, and indeed chiefly through enlightenment and education. Through the abolition of private profit, competition, profit seeking, and exploitation, harmony could rule among men, such as is exhibited in nature.

On the basis of a steady march towards enlightenment and its



miraculous power, love flowed from Hess' doctrine into a humanistic communism; all of this resulting only in injury to the proletarian class struggle. This was the reason for the necessity of a critique of Hess.

Nature had been considered by the "true" socialists as a harmonious whole, since they failed to see the bitter struggle ruling there. This idyllic view of nature finds its correlate in their concept of the original society. This harmony in society had been destroyed by the rise in the world of private property, which had the consequence of isolating men and generally spreading egoism and exploitation. Individuals and society thus became abstractions, when the individual was thought of as the incarnation of singleness, society the embodiment of generality, when the relations between society and the individual were viewed as being constituted by the relationship between generality and individuality.

From their idealized concept of human activity, the "true" socialists erected their critique of bourgeois society. The characteristic of this kind of society for the "true" socialists as well as for Hess was the separation of work and joy, which split was occasioned by the antithesis of owner and non-owner, thus rupturing society into halves and have nots.

United with the sentimental, idealist character of "true" socialism was its literary tendency and its tendency to throw phrases around, all of this reaching its zenith with Karl Grün. Armed with German "science" Karl Grün gave a good scolding to the French theoreticians, since they were unconcerned with the "essence" of man. Since his views were not based on a knowledge of economic and social relationships, his reflections were but phantasies.

Meanwhile Georg Kuhlmann was up to his tricks in Switzerland. With him communism degenerated into quackery, reflecting the lack of a vigorous proletariat in his country. The inclination to prophesy, which had already been noticeable in W. Weitling and A. Becker, attained its zenith with Kuhlmann, who proceeded to mangle communism with bombast and a prophecy of a kingdom on earth.

Marx and Engels showed that utopian socialism must necessarily fall into phraseology, that the hypostatization of the ego brought out





an incredible antithesis of individual and society. Such a critique is a sound one from Stirner to Nietzsche, to today's existentialists, who also explain human relations with the aid of an hypostatized individual.

The next stage in the socio-political development of Marx and Engels was brought about in their present, direct participation in the class struggle of the proletariat. Its socio-political expression appeared in the founding of Communist Correspondence Committees, the Deutschen-Brüsseler-Zeitung, and the Communist League, in which was pursued a critique of utopianism and reformism through discussions with Ruge, Heinzen, Weitling, and Proudhon; such things expanded and deepened Marx's economic understanding. The principal outcome of their ideological development and their newly won revolutionary tactics was to be expounded in The Communist Manifesto,\* which appeared on the eve of the Revolution of 1848.

Marx and Engels now saw the state clearly as the lackey of business and the instrument of the ruling class; they advocated its unconditional destruction for the realization of the proletariat's goals. They showed their fundamental analysis of the capitalist system and bourgeois society to others, in which the proletarian struggle is sharpened by capitalism's evolution, inevitably resulting in a communist revolution, which would only be victorious when the proletariat resolutely understood its class interests and eliminated all mystifications.

\* See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Selected Works (New York: International, 1968), pp. 31-63--Editor.

HUMBOLDT UNIVERSITY  
GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC





## Other Philosophical Studies of the Editors

Edmund D. Boyce, *The Philosophy of the Vedas and the Upanishads*, University of Missouri Press, 1966.

David H. DeGroot, *Hinduism and the Philosophy of the Upanishads*, Christopher Publishing House, 1967, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, Quincy, Mass.

DeGroot, *Philosophical Foundations of Hinduism*, Nieuw Archief 41 (1970), Groningen, The Netherlands.

David H. DeGroot, Dale Rugeley, eds., *Modern Hindu Philosophical Currents in Contemporary Philosophy*, Nieuw Archief 49, 105, Brentwood Blvd., St. Louis, Mo.

Dale Rugeley, *The Naturalistic Foundation of Indian Thought*, University of Washington Press, 1964, Seattle.

Rugeley, *The Philosophy of India and Its Impact on American Thought*, Charles C. Thomas, 1970, 301 3<sup>rd</sup> E. Lawrence Ave., Springfield, Illinois.



1  
D  
A  
C

**KEEP CARD IN POCKET**

**IT IS IMPORTANT THAT  
CARD BE KEPT IN POCKET**

Withdrawn from UF. Surveyed to 10.